



SYSTEMATIC GIVING.




CONSIDERED UNDER TWO HEADS.

BY MRS. C. O. HOSTERMAN.



HALIFAX, N. S.
THEAKSTON, & CO., PRINTERS.
1888.





*Can. Hosterman, Charlotte O.
Pam.*

SYSTEMATIC GIVING



CONSIDERED UNDER TWO HEADS.



- 1ST. *GOD'S RIGHT AS SOVEREIGN, LORD AND CREATOR.*
- 2ND. *MAN RESPONSIBILITY AS THE RECIPIENT OF GOD'S BOUNTIES.*



HALIFAX, N. S.
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WESTERN GLOBE

1917

PREFACE.

With a deep sense of the greatness of the subject, and a thorough conviction of its vital importance to the well-being of the world at large, and the religious portion of it particularly, the Author sends forth this effort in form of an "Essay on Systematic Giving."

APPENDIX

The following table shows the results of the experiments conducted on the effect of the temperature of the water on the rate of the reaction. The results are given in the form of a table, the first column of which gives the temperature of the water in degrees Celsius, and the second column gives the rate of the reaction in terms of the amount of gas evolved per unit time.

CONTENTS.

PART 1st.—CHAPTER 1st.

GOD'S RIGHT AS SOVEREIGN, LORD AND CREATOR, PROVED FROM
SCRIPTURE.

CHAPTER 2nd.

GOD'S OWNERSHIP AND AUTHORITY PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE.

PART 2nd.—CHAPTER 1st.

MAN'S INDEBTEDNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD AS STEWARDS
OF THE BLESSINGS GIVEN.

CHAPTER 2nd.

THE BENEFITS OF SYSTEMATIC DISTRIBUTION OF OUR MEANS
FOUNDED ON AN INTELLIGENT AND THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERA-
TION OF THE VARIOUS SCHEMES, HAVING FOR THEIR OBJECT
THE FURTHERANCE OF CHRIST'S GLORY AND THE
BENEFIT OF MANKIND.

CHAPTER 3rd.

GIVING IN GENERAL. SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER IV

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER V

THE HISTORY OF THE

SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

GOD'S RIGHT AS SOVEREIGN, LORD AND CREATOR PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. 1st, 1st. The name God, expressive of omnipotent power. In the Hebrew means strong and mighty. The Psalmist breaks forth into songs of praise, as he contemplates the glories of God's works. "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;" What is man? that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" The allusions in the third verse lead to the idea that this Psalm was written by David in his early life, when his nightly watches as a Shepherd, gave him frequent and ever recurring opportunities of observing the glory and Majesty of God, as shown in the exceeding beauty and brilliancy of the starry host. Ps. 8th, 3-4. "Praise Him sun and moon: praise Him, all ye stars and light." Ps. 148th, 3. Let the sun, the fount of light and gladness, precious emblem of the "Light which lighteth every man"—let the moon which rules the night and is type of the church giving to the world the light received from the Sun of Righteousness—let the stars, so vast in numbers and lovely in their brightness, let these ever praise Him, who made and blessed them in the beginning. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work." Ps. 19th, 1. Returning to the 8th Psalm again the sweet singer of Israel, contemplates man, the last and noblest work of all—the dignities and capacities bestowed upon him, the position assigned to him, viz. glory, honour and dominion, as he was before the fall, and such as he will again be when restored by Christ, to whom as the only and one perfect man, the expressions in this Psalm are especially applicable. "The heavens are Thine; the earth also is Thine; Thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is." "Thou hast made the north and the south: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name." He had created the heavens

and the earth, the north and the south, the snow-capped hills of Lebanon, and the parched and arid deserts of Africa and Arabia, the height of Hermon on the east of Jordan, near which Jesus was baptized, and Tabor on the west, on which He was transfigured, are His for He made them: and without "Him was not anything made that was made." He hath made all things in wisdom and will fill them with his love, The Sovereign and Creative prerogative of God is fully proved from the verses already quoted and dwelt upon, and the marginal references* will well repay a careful reading and comparing one with the other, all bearing out the same teaching and pointing to God as the great "I am" of both Old and New Testament, and fraught with expressions of the glorious majesty of the Triune God. From many others I will close this chapter with a few remarks on the following verses. "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king." This Psalm which is so full of joy and exultation has no title in Hebrew except "Hallelujah" all praise and all joy looking forward to the time when Christ should indeed come and enter Jerusalem, meek and lowly, yet acknowledged by Pilate in the hour of His deepest abasement as "King of the Jews," and further on, past suffering and death to that time, when the Lord Jesus shall reign in majesty over the obedient world, and His saints shall praise Him with one mind and with one mouth, as the Creator of all, and the visible and acknowledged king of all. They shall say "Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Praise ye the Lord ! 'tis good to raise
Your hearts and voices in His praise ;
His nature and His works invite
To make this duty our delight.

He formed the stars, those heavenly flames,
He counts their number, calls their names,
His wisdom's vast, and knows no bound,
A deep where all our thoughts are drowned.

Sing to the Lord exalt Him high,
Who spreads His clouds along the sky,
There He prepares the fruitful rain,
Nor lets the drops descend in vain.

He makes the grass the hills adorn,
And clothes the smiling fields with corn,
The beasts with food his hands supply,
And the young ravens when they cry.

— COPIED.

(*) John 1: 1, 2. Heb. 1: 10. Psalm 102: 25. Isaiah 44: 24. Jer. 10: 12.
Col. 1: 16, 17. Heb. 11: 3. Zech. 12: 1. Psalm 149: 2.

GOD'S OWNERSHIP AND AUTHORITY PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein." Ps. 24th, 1. God here claims possession of the whole earth, its fulness—everything with them that dwell on it; recalling the creation to our minds and shewing the inalienable claim of the great maker and owner of all things, and who among the wealthiest or most powerful of potentates is in position to dispute or gainsay this claim, or consider himself as really owning anything. "Who hath prevented me that I should repay him." Job 41st, 11. What can man give to Him; who possesses all things including man himself? (again) "If I were hungry I would not tell thee; for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." Ps. 50th, 12. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine saith the Lord of Hosts." Hag. 2nd, 8. Thus we see the treasures hidden in the bowels of the earth are His, and men may work and slave to accumulate quantities of those precious metals, they may hoard and look upon them as their chief good, but they can only hold them during the master's pleasure, for they are His and unless used for His glory, will prove a snare instead of a blessing. "Behold all souls are mine." Ezek. 18th, 4. God thus claims the earth and its treasures, and in the passage just quoted, the souls of men as His property. The teaching of this last verse is evident; all are equally subject and accountable to God, and each will be reckoned with separately: for whatever may be the influence of social connections and surroundings, they cannot interfere with personal responsibility, nay more, if the wicked become good or the good become wicked, each shall be treated according to the change in his or her character, and who dare call in question, the action of Him, who owns the souls of men, or what remains for us, but to yield a hearty assent—acknowledge our nothingness, and entire dependence on God, for life, health, home, friends, wealth and every comfort and blessing we enjoy. Man has a right of property towards his fellow man, but certainly none towards God: no matter how wealthy, no matter how hardly earned, we cannot call our property our own as regards Him; for His right is positive and inalienable as the Creator and Owner of "all the ends of the earth." The silver and the gold are His and He gives them to whom He

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will. If it were his pleasure all His followers could have them, but there are treasures that might be endangered by riches, thus many humble, poor Christians rich in faith and good works, are children of the Kings of Kings and feel there is a mansion prepared for them where Christ will be ever present and sorrow and sighing will be no more. "Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also with all that therein is." Deut. 10th, 14. Thus again and again God asserts His right to each and all of those things which man prizes most. "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is mine." Ex. 13th, 10. "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." Ps. 50th, 10. Of Canaan the land of promise, the land hardly obtained by travel, toil and warfare, He said "the land shall not be sold forever for the land is mine," saith the Lord of Hosts. The pages of the New Testament give the same universal claim made and acted on, "Come and follow me" was the address of the God - man to whomsoever and whenever He pleased. It meant the forsaking of every earthly calling or possession yet was not asked as a favour but demanded as a right. Jesus spoke with authority and not as the Scribes. He sees two men fishing on the Sea of Galilee, following their occupation by which they provided for the wants of their families as well as their own. Jesus speaks, "Follow me" and at once they leave their boats, nets, everything and follow the master. Further on two more are occupied in the same manner, but their aged father is with them, Hark! there comes the same command, with the same result, "they left the ship and their father and followed Him." He called Matthew from the receipt of custom, and at once all was left in obedience to that command. The poor widow gave all she was worth and Jesus commends her generosity. The young man who loved his riches too much to obey Christ's command "To sell all that he had and follow Him," refused the call and is never mentioned again; while those who obeyed, willingly yielding up everything that they might gain Christ, recognized themselves as stewards of God's bounties,— he held fast by the sense of ownership and by his covetousness and unfaithfulness shut himself out from the kingdom of God. "He went away sorrowful for he had great possessions." Yes! riches may be kept to the everlasting ruin of those who possess them, and allow their hearts to grovel and be satisfied with the perishing and passing things of earth. Following Jesus meant the giving up old employments, companions, home, everything, but what matter? Winning souls for the master, from the service of sin and self, from

the darkness of superstition or the bigotry of Judaism, into the glorious freedom of the children of God; was well worth the sacrifice, and Andrew, Peter, James, John, and the rest felt amply repaid by having the honour of being bearers of the glad tidings that Christ had come and brought "Grace and immortality to light in the Gospel." The parable of the talents as recorded in twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew gives a true picture of man's position towards God. Those to whom the talents are given are all servants of God, and are represented as working for Him and reprov'd when they did not do so Christ's servants here mean all who by their Christian profession stand in subjection to him. His "goods" mean all their gifts and endowments, whether acquired, natural or spiritual and while to some more is entrusted than to others, from all an equal fidelity is expected. The two who traded with their talents and increased them in the same ratio, although one had double the other received the same commendation and reward: while the third, who buried the talent and kept it intact to give to the master on His return, was deprived of what he already had and cast into outer darkness: fit picture of those who shut up their gifts from active service for Christ without actually squandering them on unworthy objects. The master denounced them and with the power of a Sovereign consigns them to everlasting punishment and misery. "Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Now while passages could be multiplied bearing out the idea at the head of this chapter, I feel satisfied those I have considered fully prove God's sovereignty, over all the works of his hands. That His right of proprietor is inalienable and as Lord and master, Jesus when on earth called whom he would. Controlling even the evil spirits, healing the sick, raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, causing the deaf to hear, the lame to walk. Yes, He taught with authority and spake as man never yet spoke. For our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be rich. Having proved God's perfect right to everything we possess, let us proceed in the next chapter to prove what claim God makes on our substance.

GOD'S DEMAND, THE LAW OF TITHE.

In Genesis 14th, we read that Abraham gave tithes of the spoil he had taken from Chedor'omer and his confederate kings, to Melchizedek, king of Salem and Priest of the Most High God. These goods belonged to those whom he had rescued and Abraham had no claim on them, further than having recovered them. The king of Sodom acknowledges this claim and wishes Abraham to take a portion for himself, but he refuses; "I will not take, he says, anything that is thine." Now after speaking so decidedly, Abraham takes a tenth of the spoil, and gives it to Melchizedek; as victor giving what he knows is God's portion and which he would not surrender, feeling it was the special property of Him to whom all things belonged. This tribute is received by Melchizedek as a matter of course, as God's Priest he had blessed Abraham and in accepting tithes, he evidently performs the duties of his office, thus proving by deduction that such an offering was a known and religious homage and spoken of as such by Paul in Hebrews 7th. As to whom Melchizedek was, the mystery shrouding him has never been removed, but as a type of Christ he takes the highest place among all the personages of the Old Testament. Not David the sweet singer of Israel, Solomon in all his glory, Moses the great lawgiver, Aaron the High Priest, or Joshua the valiant leader and captain of Israel's hosts, can compare as types of Christ, with this King of Righteousness and Peace, and Priest of the Most High God. Before proceeding to consider the law of Tithe as given to God's ancient people, I would advert to Jacob's vow as bearing out our argument that the apportioning a tenth was well known and practised long before circumcision or the Levitical Priesthood was established. We all know the circumstances of Jacob's exile from home and can easily imagine his thoughts would accuse him, of deceit and having caused sorrow to his aged father, and stirred anger, hate and revenge in Esau's heart. True Isaac had forgiven him; but who can sin and leave no scar. God comforts him by a vision so glorious—so plain—that Jacob acknowledges his presence and putting stones together, he pours oil upon it, and thus consecrates to God's service, and vows to present a tenth of whatever he possesses if God spares his life to return to his home. God has placed man

next in dignity to the angels and crowned him with the empire of the world; and through sin, man has lost much and become liable to death, yet he still retains some remains of his original dominion. "Thou mad'st him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." Ps. 8th, 6. Now while God has thus given us all things richly to enjoy, and leaves us in freedom to use and increase our substance to the extent of our ability, there is at the same time always something to remind us that there is one above to whom these things belong and whose perfect right it is to withdraw or continue them as he sees fit. The ocean may appear to roll its billows where it pleases without hindrance, but it is met by the shore and hears the words "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Adam in Eden was reminded there was a greater than he when forbidden to eat of the tree of the "Knowledge of Good and Evil" death being the penalty of disobedience. Many persons say they prefer free will offerings. Most certainly let them be free will for God loves a cheerful giver; but I intend to prove that God who placed man over the works of His hands; *has made a specific demand for a certain portion of our so called possessions* and this can easily be done, by proving from Scripture that the tenth was considered as God's in the Old Testament and the teachings of the New carry out the same idea on a larger scale, and till we have donated that portion of our income whether large or small, we are robbing God! think of it robbing God. God's demand.

"And the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." Lev. 27th, 30. "Behold I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation." Num. 18th, 27. There is no doubtful sound about this command: all came from God and He was to be acknowledged and honoured, the whole produce of the land was subjected to the Tithe tribute. It was a yearly rent which the Israelites as tenants paid to God the owner of the land; and a thank offering they rendered to Him for the bounties of His providence. A tenth was paid by the Levites to the Priests and afterwards they had the same liberty to use the rest of the produce of their threshing-floors or wine-presses, that the other tribes of Israel enjoyed. "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year, and thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy vine and of thy oil, and

the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou may'st learn to fear the Lord thy God always." Deut. 14th, 23. This is a new demand and to be considered a religious duty. It was to be brought as an offering to the Sanctuary, and if the distance was too great its value was to be given in money. The Levites had no inheritance, and the Israelites were not to forget them, but honestly tithe their increase, which tithe with a certain proportion of the sacrifices gave them a comfortable and assured fund for their support. One tenth was God's demand at first, but with increased advantages and privileges, the responsibilities are also increased. And "to whom much is given, much will be required." By this second tithe it is evident the ancient Israelite was commanded to give a fifth of his living to God. And that a prompt obedience to this law was given we read "and as soon as the command come abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first fruits of corn, wine, oil and honey and of all the increase of the fields; and the tithes of all the things brought they in abundantly." 2 Chron. 31st, 5. Noble example and hearty assent to the principal of acknowledging that all things belong to and come from God, and that it is His blessing which maketh rich and bringeth no sorrow therewith. "At the end of every three years, thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates, and the Levite (because he hath no part or inheritance with thee.) And the stranger, and the fatherless and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the works of thine hand which "thou doest." "The poor shall never cease out of the land." All the tribes of Israel became owners of property on the conquest of Canaan, except the tribe of Levi; from which came the Aaronic Priesthood. God in his providence foresaw the event and permitted it, partly as a punishment for disobedience, and partly for the exercise of benevolent and charitable feelings. "That the poor should never cease out of the land," and so it has been ever since. It is one of the highest privileges of Christianity to walk in the footsteps of Him "Who went about continually doing good." Whether this was a distinct tithe or blended with the second one there is not sufficient proof to decide, but be that as it may, it plainly shows the special care of and provision made for them. There were also several other offerings commanded; for Israel was required to give constantly a tenth to the Levites, Feasts, and poor every third year. To all pious purposes over and above what the law prescribed—to bring free will offerings as love might prompt. I would for a moment pause to consider the

Levites who although receiving tithes set apart as their portion by the Israelites, in their turn were also required to pay a tenth to the priests. "Speak unto the Levites and say unto them," "When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from among them for your inheritance : then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. Thus we see no class was exempted from the highest to the lowest ; all were expected to give and in doing so not only obeyed the law but consulted their own interest. This giving is not confined to Old Testament times. The early Christian Church, had all things in common and the rich and poor were placed on an equality, the rich had nothing over and the poor had no lack. Let our hearts emulate like simple childish faith, just trusting in God to bless the labor of our hands, while with souls clinging to Jesus as the drowning sailor grasps the life-boat, let us see to it, that covetousness and love of this world does not warp our soul and make shipwreck of our hopes for time and eternity. God certainly claims a tenth of our time, talents, money and whatever he has given us. We are so accustomed to think of the tithe as a legal claim which may be enforced by law, that we are apt to carry our associations to the records of the Old Testament. But on thoughtful consideration we find that the tithe was a voluntary contribution and it does not appear, that there was any provision made by the law of Moses, for the recovery of the tithe, if the people were unwilling to pay it. It was considered simply as a religious obligation, and this is more strongly shown by the expostulations addressed to the Israelites when they withheld their tithe. The declaration which the Israelite made every third year before God, was the only security with respect to the second second, "I have brought away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them unto the Levites, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless and the widow, according to all thy commandments, which thou hast commanded me ; I have not transgressed thy commandments neither have I forgotten them." It is thus manifest that the great difference between the law of liberality under the Gospel and that of the Mosaic dispensation is that the latter while it leaves it on the religious feeling in common with the other, specified in addition the proportion that should be given. The first feeling that would prompt the giving of the tithe, would be that of gratitude for mercies received, for the tithes were an expression of thankfulness and surely this feeling must have been deeply experienced by the Israelites. The land of Canaan which they occupied had been won by hard struggles, and God's guiding

hand had led them to the goodly country; by the Pillar of Cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night even the land promised to Abraham. As they reaped their harvest and gathered the fruit into barns these facts must have been often before their minds. They were to transmit an account of the scenes in their early history from generation to generation,—the father to the children: and the Levite, that was within their gate, whose subsistence was largely dependent upon the tithe, would for his own sake, take care to remind the Israelites of these wonderful events. The bondage in Egypt, God's miraculous power displayed in their behalf, the Exodus, the passage through the Red Sea, water from the rock, Manna, etc. Could they then with these facts in their minds, grudge to render the tenth part of their harvest to Him, who had sent the early and the latter rain? Again mingled with the feeling of gratitude, would be those of veneration and awe for the power of Jehovah the high and lofty one who inhabited eternity. Thus Abraham felt when he gave tithes to Melchizedek, he honoured God and hence his liberality to his priest. The Jews might be surpassed in *arts*—power or fame, but to the Israelites alone pertained the honour of being God's peculiar people. His chosen ones. And among them alone were the oracles of the living God. While these feelings were in lively exercise, the Jews might exceed, but would certainly not suffer their liberality to fall below the measure which had been enacted. And withholding a tenth is expressly called a robbery of God. The great reason however upon which God based the law of Tithe was that of justice. This must go before liberality or generosity. If a claim be just there is little liberality in settling it. The land of the Levites was divided among the people, they were to devote themselves wholly to the service of God and consequently could not provide for their temporal wants. The people had the benefit of their spiritual services, (which no tithe could repay) it was only simple justice that they support the ministers of religion. If the Israelites not withstanding these reasons, failed in the performance of this duty, they incurred very great guilt. During the time that Malichi was the Prophet of the Lord, this was the case and the Most High sent a famine upon the Jews because of their conduct, which was not removed until they had brought all the tithes into His storehouse. "Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me. But ye say wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings, ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Mal. 3rd, 8. We have thus proved from Scripture that God made a specific demand upon His ancient people to be

met not grudgingly as under the Gospel, the Christian is left to determine himself what he ought to give. Nor is the want of a definite rule an unintentional omission. God's law is perfect, and although the Christian may wish a definite portion had been mentioned, there are abundant reasons why it has not been given. The Mosaic economy was for the Jews specially as a peculiar people: while the religion of Jesus is adapted to the necessities of the whole world.



MAN'S INDEBTEDNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD AS STEWARDS OF THE BLESSINGS GIVEN.

It seems strange that in a Christian land and among the professed followers of Jesus such an appeal as this requires to be made. Why! the Idolators, (whose claim on your sympathy and means I intend very soon to advocate) do not know what stint means when an act of worship to their false God is to be celebrated. Whatever they hold most dear or costly is given up without a murmur, nay more with gladness and rejoicing as if a great privilege had been conferred by being allowed to contribute. Christian brother and sister, the law says "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." Love is the fulfilling of the law, and the heart that glows with love to God, needs no law about giving, but is a law to itself. Were we always in the same frame of mind, there would be no necessity to urge again and again the setting apart a certain portion of our income, as God's, according as He has prospered us. But how often does coldness and indifference come over our hearts and we are prone to wander from our Saviour. We cannot trust these hearts of ours, and it is a good plan to have a set purpose, and clear rules, to keep us in the way. Many persons have a very exaggerated idea of their giving and it is not till brought face to face with plain distinct statements that they can be made to feel their own meanness in the measure they give to God's cause compared with what they lavish on themselves. And then excuse themselves by saying they give what they can spare. A favourite expression with some who never deny themselves any gratification, and who do not know what self-denial means, and whose lavish expenditure in their homes and on their persons certainly leave a very narrow margin for charity or loving benevolence. That man will have to render an account to God, of the use made of the blessings and mercies he has received, is admitted as a general truism but press the question home until it touches some darling idol or besetting sin and then whisper "The silver and the gold are mine saith the Lord of Hosts," how man's heart rebels. Why! I worked late and early that I might have everything beautiful in my home and enjoy myself in my old age. "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor." No! no! that is too much

and I cannot do it. Alas! stewards are expected to keep exact accounts, fellow christians let this be a sifting time and with earnest faithful hearts let us see how we stand prepared with our account. Christ has given his life for us; what have we done for Him? God has blessed us with health, home, happiness. What return have we made for these blessings? The Spirit has refreshed these souls of ours and given us the spirit of adoption whereby we call "Abba, Father have we always listened to the strivings or have we resisted the pleading voice. These are calm practical questions and on your faithfulness and ability to answer them, in the affirmative, depends your everlasting salvation. The man who makes a God of his money, puts his whole trust in it, not only loves it, but it is the object he worships, no matter what church he attends or by what name he is called, I repeat he *worships* his wealth; it is the object of what faith he has. His hopes for his children rest on it, his comfort and support for advanced years are in it, his present influence and position depend on it, in short it takes God's place in his soul and we read constantly where the passion for gold has taken possession of a man to such a degree, that human affections seemed destroyed and the miserable life and death of a miser has ensued. Yes riches may prove the ruin of an immortal soul if trusted in. No hope for time, no preparation for eternity, no treasures laid up where neither "moth nor rust can corrupt," truly the advice contained in 1st Tim., 6, 17, 19, is applicable in such a case "charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life. This is treasure that we act wisely in laying up, for the works are the outcome of faith and show forth love to God for all His mercies. And looking forward to eternal life through the finished and accepted work of Christ. Earthly riches scattered in faith, lay up in store a sure increase of heavenly wealth. "We gather by scattering." Prov. 11th, 24. Eternal life old M. 33 read, that which is really life. The life that now is, its goods being unsubstantial and itself a vapour. James 4th, 14. But wealth can be made a great blessing as in the case of God's ancient servant Job. He had great possessions, prosperity was all around him, everything he undertook succeeded, yet his riches were no snare, why? because they were consecrated to God and while he and his family rejoiced and enjoyed affluence, his heart went forth

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to the poor and oppressed, with ready sympathy and open purse. His wealth made no stain upon his record, for we read that while his sons and daughters were visiting and enjoying themselves at each others houses, he was rising early and offering sacrifices to God lest they had sinned or perhaps forgotten God while their souls were filled with the intoxication of pleasure. And in Job 29th, we read thus "When the ear heard me then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, I was a father to the poor and the cause that I knew not I searched out. Noble example of a sincere Christian freely distributing and giving back the time, the silver, and the gold to Him who gave it. Again when Satan was allowed by God to prove him, by depriving him of all his children and possessions yet he could and did retain his integrity and faith in God acknowledging His perfect right in everything and in words of humble submission say "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord." The Creator has an undoubted proprietorship in the work of His hands. "Shall the clay say to the potter? what doest thou." God has given us wealth or the power to get it and our actions if not our words shew that we consider it as our own, got by our own cleverness, finesse or superior business qualities; poor worms of the dust what powers of mind or body have we that are not a gift from God? Let there be a free and hearty distribution by you of the fulness with which God has blessed you that others may participate in and enjoy the blessings with you. Do not be satisfied with a strict conformance to allowing a tenth, for Christians should abound in good works towards others and sow the seed of love and charity, realizing the highly blessed character delineated in Psalm 112th, 9. "No keeping back no grudging, but scattering abroad wherever there was a worthy object." The character of the upright man as shewn in this passage deserves our earnest consideration. Temporal blessings follow the faithful service of God and are only removed when they endanger or interfere with spiritual growth. Generosity based upon sound judgment and confidence in God's guidance, taking the law of God as the rule of life, form a character which preserves from fear of evil. A truly pious man is liberal and will increase in substance the more he gives. Firm in right principles his heart will be established and not be moved, for God's blessing will rest on him and his. At the very entrance of disciple-

ship Christ says, "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself." Ah! that monster self how many victims has it made and how many are its slaves in Christian lands and Churches to-day. We obtain pardon by faith in Christ and eternal life through Him, but to conquer self is a life long struggle but not of necessity an unsuccessful one. No thank God, His Grace is ours if we will only ask it. And the victory over the flesh, world and devil will be ours through Christ who died. The piety that has the true ring, is that which will face a storm or give up its couch of ease to help the outcast, that delights to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, cheer and comfort the sick and whose mission field is wherever there is need; what do we owe to Jesus? All, everything in this life and in that which is to come. What then shall we give Him? (O that I had a thousand voices that could reverberate from shore to shore of this vast Dominion, and to all the ends of the earth) with that question. Give! yourselves first, body, soul, and spirit and then the master would not only get a tithe but all. Too costly a gift perhaps you think and self whispers a much smaller offering will do. If we allow the master to speak to our hearts I am sure He will demand a full share of what we may consider our property. In a former part of this essay I gave Scriptural proof that God claimed the ownership of the whole earth. They who rest their hopes and trust in riches certainly trust in uncertainty itself. Just look how often money changes hands. Now it is mine, then another's, and then another's and surely that which many own belongs to none, love of money is not the sole root of evil but it is a leading root of bitterness we read in Proverbs. "The prosperity of fools destroy them." The rich man in the Gospel felt quite at ease and confident he had goods laid up for many years. Yes my soul I have worked late and early to amass wealth, I have done with very little during my early years, I have passed by the poor and needy that I might have more, now my soul, see no more work; no more worry; rest, eat, drink, but God said "Thou fool *this night* thy soul shall be required of thee." Whose shall those things be to gain which thou has neglected to lay up treasure in heaven, and tried to satisfy thy immortal soul with the chaff, the tares, and the brambles of this empty and disappointing world. The duty of Christian giving or as a man born anew in Christ, not his own, but raised above earthly things and so having parted with all right in himself. Christ's work to be his work, Duet. 15th, 7, 11. We see by these verses the way in which the rich were to consider the poor. Moses admonishes the Israelites against a mean and selfish spirit, and exhorts to a liberal spirit of

charity and kindness which will secure the divine blessing. Rouse up then soldiers of Christ and gird thy armour on, the Captain wants your aid to beat down the opposing forces of sensual and vicious habits. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" and some writers have spoken eloquently on the luxury of giving. Certain it is God does in very many instances testify his delight in a liberal and unostentatious christianity, the outcome of a soul freed from the bondage of self and rejoicing in the sense of adoption into God's family and favor through the blood of Jesus) by increase of means and blessings so plain that there can be no mistake as to their source. What we spend upon ourselves and our surroundings will decay these bodies or in other words, these houses of clay will become the food of worms, they are not to be despised but treated and cared for well, as the cas'tet of the Immortal soul. Yet when death has set his seal and the spirit returned to God who gave it, "Bury my dead out of my sight" is the language forced from us. Whatever we may leave when we die, we lose forever,—but what we give to God and spend in his service, is laid up for us in heaven. Terrible thought, can my carelessness in giving ever have caused a soul to be lost, or my dislike to speaking about myself caused any to doubt the reality of God's work in my heart. God has been calling us by the benefits he has conferred upon us day by day to help others. Virtue would be added to faith and knowledge to virtue, while the three graces of Temperance, Patience and Godliness would follow an increase of liberality in our churches greater than from any other cause. Faith and works can never be separated on earth, either is dead without the other "By their fruits ye shall know them" and that men are judged according to their works, we know from the description of the final judgment "come ye blessed of my Father" for ye did such and such things. "Depart ye cursed" for ye did not do them. The Christian if sincerely desirous to find out the best method by which he can most thoroughly exercise the talent of property by relieving the necessities of man, need only try the comforts of systematic appropriation according to the special claims of different objects, to feel that there is no other system that possesses the same power of extending his usefulness towards his fellow men or that as great a benefit to the party practising it. Paul says "I will gladly spend and he spent for your souls." I am sure that christians are closely watched by those who know not Christ whether like his master he delights to spread abroad, or selfishly prefer to retain all for personal comfort or emolument. The effect of the adoption of a regular consecration to God of ourselves first and a distinct and generous

portion of our belongings. Will give "a conscience void of offence towards God and man." He feels more and more strongly that he is but a steward and that to refuse or neglect to act up to that knowledge, would be both dishonest and idolatrous, and while this continues the life of joy and piety must indeed be feeble. Now why is it that when there is special need for funds to carry on some particular society or organization, the aim of which is to lighten the burden of a portion of the human family, earnest appeals are made from our pulpits, and christians are incited to give, by pictures of misery or distress. And even when under such influence the collections have met the demand does not the church as a people feel as if a meritorious act had been done? at sight of which men must bow and acknowledge a broad margin of good works. Unprofitable servants of a kind and benevolent Father. Surely you will get your reward. Now if every professing Christian would set aside a tenth first and then as God gave him increase: any extra call would be gladly responded to and church members would speak less frequently of the necessity of stirring up the people to bring their offerings into God's storehouse. Let us attempt great things for God and expect great results from Him and we will not be disappointed. How can the spirit of liberality and unselfishness be made more general? In my opinion we must begin at the beginning and take the nurseries. Teach the children by precept and example to conquer selfishness, make them willing to yield even individual rights, when all are to be benefitted. Teach them from the early dawn of intelligence how much they owe to God, and here the Mother's love can be made the medium and subject of the first lessons and what more holy task than leading the little ones to Him who died that they might live. The child loves and implicitly believes in and trusts its mother, and that love can be made the motive power of obedience, the little one sees that mother is grieved when it does wrong and the sadness in the loved one's face will often prove a stronger check than punishment would ever be. Love is a gentle and thorough teacher. The mother tells the child that God loves it and as proof of that love, points to its comfortable home and the blessings around it, but the strongest argument is that God gave it Mother and Father to take care of it for Him and that Jesus, God's well beloved son, came to earth and died, that the darling child might have a bright and everlasting home. Ye parents look to it that ye pourtray God as a merciful and loving father supplying all their wants through you as His appointed means. Then when old enough tell them again and again of God's unspeakable gift even Jesus,

bring them by prayer to His feet, and let them hear his loving words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven," then tell them of the thousands of little ones who have never heard his name, and encourage them to give up some gratification in order to be able to give something to help other lambs to hear the glad story of the Cross. A child's heart is soft and easily impressed by kindly words and actions and see to it that you write nothing impure on these tablets but stories of the Lamb of God. His innocence and Love. His patience and kindness to the little ones. His sympathy and relief for all. Let the voice of childhood's joy be in your dwellings and hymns of praise burst from youthful lips. Too young to understand I think I hear some one say; no, no, you teach them and God's glory will be the brighter for your efforts and your children may be His in that day when "He maketh up His jewels." Do not be afraid of beginning too early. The Ark will be taken care of—children are precious gifts and solemn responsibility rests on those to whom they are entrusted and woe to those who through bad example or neglect allow them to grow up in ignorance of their privileges, for it is on them the well being of the church depend when the mothers and fathers of the present have passed away and their actions whether selfish or otherwise have gone before them to the judgment. Blessed commendation if the well done of the master sounds in our ears, "Come ye blessed of my Father." Again Luke 19th, 17, "And He said unto him, well done thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." Now let the children see the regular laying apart a sum of money as God's every Sabbath morning and let them also be taught the lesson of denying self that they too may add their share; and every member of the family should contribute towards it, then at family worship all hearts would feel an active interest in the spread and increase of Christ's kingdom towards which they had contributed, and a willingness felt to do without some things, hitherto looked upon as necessities that more might go to relieve the destitute and lighten the abodes of sin and misery with the rays of the sun of Righteousness. If God promised of old "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." If so large a return was promised, for the performance of a prescribed duty how much more may be expected when love is the regulating power and not the law. Let all members and

adherents of the christian churches take stock of the Lord's increase, and they may then expect that blessing that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow. One of John Wesley's maxims was, "Get all you can, save all you can, and give all you can." The life of Christ was revealed in His labours of love, when He gave himself for us. Our lives are manifested in their highest and finest character when they are spent in the service of the Lord in doing good. None of us can live for ourselves alone, we belong to the home, society, world and it depends upon how we fulfil our duties to each other that stamps our character for all time as belonging to Christ or the world.

"Up and away ! like the dew of the morn'g
Soaring from earth to its home in the Sun,
So let me steal away, gently and lovingly
Only remembered by what I have done.

Gladly away from this toil would I hasten,
Up to the crown that for me has been won,
Unthought of by man in rewards or in praises
Only remembered by what I have done.

Needs there the praise of the love written record,
The name and the epitaph graved on the stone !
The things we have lived for let them be our story,
We but remembered by what we have done,

My name and my place and my tomb all forgotten
The brief race of time well and patiently run
So let me pass away peacefully, silently,
Only remembered by what I have done.

Up and away like the odors of sunset
That sweeten the twilight as darkness comes on
So be my life—a thing felt but not noticed
Only remembered by what I have done.

Yes ; like the fragrance that wanders in freshness
When the flowers that it came from are closed up and gone,
So would I be to this world's weary dwellers,—
Only remembered by what I have done.

I need not be missed ; if my life has been bearing
As its summer and autumn moved silently on
The bloom, and the fruit ; and the seed of its season
I shall still be remembered by what I have done.

I need not be missed if another succeed me
To reap down those fields which in Spring time I have sown—
He who ploughed and who sowed is not missed by the reaper
He is only remembered by what he has done.

Not myself, but the truth in life I have spoken,—
Not myself but the seed that in life I have sown—
Shall pass on to ages—all about me forgotten
Save the truth I have spoken,—the things I have done.

So let my living be, so be my dying,—
So let my name be unblazoned, unknown,—
Upraised and unmissed, I shall yet be remembered
Yes, but remembered by what I have done.

—REV. D. H. BONAR, D. D.

THE BENEFITS OF A SYSTEMATIC DISTRIBUTION OF
OUR MEANS, FOUNDED ON AN INTELLIGENT AND
THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE CLAIMS
OF THE VARIOUS SCHEMES HAVING FOR
THEIR OBJECT THE FURTHERANCE OF
CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND BENEFIT
OF MAN.

The subject of systematic giving has been the theme of many an earnest and soul stirring exhortation from pulpit, platform and press, and various and powerful arguments brought forward to impress the minds of hearers or readers with the conviction, that the best method and one in accordance with God's dealings with mankind, is that of a well digested system of benevolence, in opposition to an impulsive and oftentimes mistaken and misplaced generosity. The human mind is so constituted that we are easily moved by sympathy to give credence to a tale of distress or destitution, and if in our power to relieve or assist, to do so, without taking the trouble of enquiring the reason why such distress exists or finding out the truthfulness or falsehood of the story, thus encouraging in many cases deceit, and fostering some of the worst vices of mankind. Why? because it is so much more easy to put the hand in a well filled purse or plentiful larder, and of our abundance give what is never missed, than to take the trouble of searching out the homes and devoting a small portion of our time in trying by judicious advice and encouraging words to bring about a better state of things. "To feed the hungry; clothe the naked, visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction" was the command of Him "who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." There are many cases where the need is urgent, and the relief must be prompt to be of any service, but as a general rule, such a course while it may procure for us the character of being very charitable, will certainly not strengthen our powers of discrimination or enable us to lay out to the best advantage the means which a kind and loving father has placed in our

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possession and for which we must give an account as to use or abuse. That a methodical and general apportioning of our substance has the authority and blessing from God, can be easily proved from the Bible, as we have already seen that the Jews were required to give a tenth always and often more to maintain the services of God's house. The giving to the Lord as held, taught and practised by Abraham, Moses, Jacob, David was not disallowed by Christ, nor were they merely ceremonial as far as they rest on our relationship to God, they are the same "yesterday—to-day and forever." Let us study the actions of the patriarchs and law-givers on this subject and surely all christians will admit that from those who live under the blaze and benefit of Gospel light, far greater contributions and far more self dedication should be expected than from the ancient Jews, who as a people refused Christ and would none of his doctrine. Surely the law of love will not give less than the ceremonial law. Christ called it a new law "That ye love one another." Why? because the view of the comparative value of the soul and body, should inspire an earnestness and self-denial in seeking the salvation and safety of the souls around us, which could not have been the outcome or result of the Mosaic law. "All that believed were together and had all things in common." Could any language present in a few words, a stronger picture of Christian love. Christians have more sympathy with the outcast, and, feeling deep gratitude for being saved themselves, they are anxious about others and with time, talents and money consecrated to God: come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Let christians be humble and bear in mind that God can do without them, and it is only as a privilege we are permitted to work with and for Him. In Cor. 1st, 11, we read "Ye also helping together by prayer for us" thus much we can surely do and the true meaning of the petition "Thy kingdom come" will show itself in our hearts and lives. At ease in Zion while souls are perishing around us. No, a thousand times no, speak, plead, pray, wrestle, warn, be patient, be loving, give yourselves to the work and yours will not be a starless crown. Money, position, experience, health, work, will not win the blessing unless love is the motive power of all our actions. "Remember in all the good we may be permitted to do, it is rather the performance of God's promise to us than ours to Him. The more we do for God the more we are indebted to Him, for our sufficiency is of Him and not of ourselves—Matthew Henry—Uncle Ben's bag, (a little book, but filled with treasure, is a solid and practical argument for the weekly setting apart God's share "Sabbath by Sabbath? This Ben saw

was in principal how God taught the Jews to sustain national religion and brotherhood." He adopted this plan as in accordance with God's word. It raised his esteem for the work of God, cherished gratitude to Him and strengthened and deepened his sympathy with man, and now he urges it upon all Christians. There is no disorder in God's plans or systems. The sun never forgets to shine or the moon and stars to keep their nightly vigil. "Order is Heaven's first law." Among men a complete system is necessary to success. I will make one more extract from "Uncle Ben's Bag," and then commend it most heartily to the church members of the present day, trusting the perusal of it may quicken the spirit of benevolence in our churches. "God love a cheerful giver" Ben feels that with rare exceptions, it is essential to cheerful giving—to have money in hand, or in an account easily available; and that a fund in hand is the secret of liberal giving, here come in the good of a well regulated system of benevolence, and to have a special place and time of depositing. Call it the Lord's bag, bank or whatever name you please. "Reader if you have any regard for personal responsibility fidelity, honour and safety in a condition of the most solemn trust, if you possess a spark of love for Him who deemed not his life and blood too precious a gift to save and bless you,—if you would not render the gracious purpose of your creation, the reasonable expectation of the Divine Redeemer, and your own hopes of salvation abortive,—or if there lives in your breast any emotion of real compassion towards those who joy not in your safety and bliss, live to God. If you retain the exercise of any true sense, prudent forethought and righteous self-love, and would tremble so to live on earth, as to find yourself homeless, friendless, and portionless in Eternity; and if you would have the existence of time prove you to be a gracious God like being, worthy of elevation to a nobler future, without dishonour to your benefactor; and not a creature of absorbing selfishness, be persuaded at once to commence a life of entire consecration." Extract Gold and Gospel. God demands a seventh portion of our time to be devoted to his service. He leaves it with ourselves how much more we will give, but He must have the seventh or we are throwing contempt on His command. "Remember the seventh day to keep it holy." The seasons as they roll in regular and settled course, recall the promise given to Noah that while the world lasted "seed time and harvest, summer and winter should not fail." "Beware of Covetousness." To over-value riches—to give them pre-eminence in our hearts that God never designed for them, this is covetousness. If the Jews were expected to bring thank and

free will offerings as memorials of God's goodness, how much more should christians feel the like obligation. There is no action of our lives that will bring more true happiness than we feel when distributing God's gifts abroad, and telling others of all His loving kindness and tender mercies. Now give practical heed to all the reasons for a stated time and portion to be given to God. The weekly gift is a sure reminder of the Sabbath and its sacred obligations. Remember the words "Them that honour me, I will honour." Did Jesus reprove Mary for the costly box of ointment with which she anointed His feet? or did He tell the widow she was wrong to give away all her living, or was there any reproof for the poor widow that had but an handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse; and yet made the prophet a cake, before she or her son took any. She trusted God and well was she repaid. A religion that does not permeate through the whole life, is not the religion that Jesus taught and acted on during the time he dwelt among men. When men give once for all to any scheme, not so much is given, but when each lay aside weekly as their prosperity increases, there is a more reliable source to draw from than when dependent on what feeling may prompt or what they can spare. Christians are never fully realizing their highest privileges, till they are willing to spend and be spent for Christ, and in blissful experience they will find that Jesus will recompense them an hundred fold for their work of love and self-denial, for God is a good pay-master and no one has ever had cause to regret having devoted the best energies of soul and body to His service. We have proved how freely the Israelites gave to God's treasury. Let us ask what place we occupy to-day in comparison of benevolence. To hear some church members complain of the many calls upon their purses, one ignorant of the true state of things, would almost think God required too much from them, but glance in their homes, find out if you can how many things they deny themselves for conscience sake, that others may be relieved. What proportion their gifts to God's treasury bear with their gifts to each other or themselves. I fear that in many instances a very narrow margin would hold the acts of self-denial. O that Christians would understand and do their duty, not of necessity, not from fear, not for the pleasure of seeing their names in print or heading subscription lists. No! no! no! these motives are unworthy this enlightened period of the world's history. When railroads and telegraphs bring man in communication and intercourse with his fellow man though separated by land and sea, distance vanishes and every right thinking man or woman should feel an interest in his

brother man, and try by every means in his power to improve or ameliorate his condition. As a system christianity embraces and claims the whole world for Christ. It seeks man in the midst of the darkness of ignorance and vice, and pours upon him the purity of the gospel as portrayed in the life and ministry of the God-man "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin and through the holy spirit strives to bring him into the liberty and happiness of the Sons of God. Christianity is or should be essentially a benevolent religion in its actions and its adherents. It is founded on the unspeakable gift of God's only Son, who "came to seek and to save that which was lost" and the follower of Jesus who regularly and systematically estimates his mercies and increase as coming from God, is only doing his duty and will find that his own soul will be enriched and a deeper sympathy with his less fortunate brother be kindled in his heart, means of usefulness will be increased, and the work of the Lord will prosper in his hand. Salvation is a gift, full, free, undeserved, enough for you, enough for me, enough for every one of Adam's soul sick and sin burdened children. There are some persons who would gladly avail themselves of the respectability that belongs (at the present time) to a profession of religion, they would partake of its benefits but keep aloof from its responsibilities. They talk glibly of that sermon or another's prayer, of this one's failing or another's inconsistency, but appeal to their purses for some good object and then see how far they are sincere, out upon such whited sepulchres, the master wants them not: They are an offence and hindrance to others. Could they only see themselves as God sees them, so much greed, self-meanness, surely they would cry to the rocks and mountains to hide them from His gaze. Fearful state and yet true of every unregenerate heart. O! fellow Christian's be faithful, be earnest, *give*, that increased efforts may be put forth, that real heathens may not live in our midst, and that wayward humanity, may be won from the haunts of vice and lured into the sweet and narrow path that leads to God. Peace, security, happiness. Which will be our way? We cannot tread in both, and the effort to do so, only leads to repeated disappointments. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "The greatest triumph of Grace is to let God mark our way and then keep both feet on the line." Paul gives a rule, the observance of which is simple and easy and possesses many advantages, he says "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him." Cor. 16th, 2. The community of goods which existed among Christians at the outset

gave temporary relief but ultimately tended to impoverish them as it put a stop to individual effort and of necessity was discontinued. What a proof it was of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, that the persecutor, who in his zeal had robbed many of their all; for believing that Jesus was the promised Saviour; should now be foremost in exertions for their relief. The first day of the week was already kept sacred by Christians, as the day of the Lord's Resurrection, and gradually took the place of the Jewish Sabbath. Three annual feasts all typical of Christian truths were ordered to be observed on the first day of the week. The feasts of the "Wave offering," "Tabernacles," "Pentecost." What time more appropriate to lay up for God as He has blessed and increased our store, the mind dwelling on His love and goodness, during the week that is passed, enjoying the rest and comforts of the Sabbath after the toil, turmoil and weariness of the week: and then it is a stated reminder that all we have, comes from, and belongs to our Heavenly Father, who supplies our wants from day to day—week to week—month to month—year to year—lifetime from the cradle to the grave. Nothing that could be done to bring fallen man back to his Creator, has been left undone. No gift is too precious for those who love and accept Christ. No position too high or exalted for the Christian. "Beloved even now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," etc. Paul says "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again. Now let there be a conscientious and systematic distribution or rather a laying aside such a portion for God, as conscience will sanction and be satisfied with, in the light of the blessings we have received and the requirements and needs of the present day. Systematic, formed and continued from a certain well defined rule. Periodic, the stated first day of the week, and punctually paid the act will at last, become the most joyful and heartfelt offering to the bountiful giver of every good gift. And we will soon realize the beauty of the thought that those who love Christ are scattered from pole to pole, but that universal brotherhood in salvation, forms the bond of union, and the thousands of the rich ascend with the millions of the poor, for their gifts are estimated not by their market value but by the spirit that prompts them. If we would have God open His treasury we must open ours, and it is only a part of our service to honour God in life, and love, and surely those who know the light, and rejoice in it, because they

feel their sins forgiven, surely gratitude should prompt to regular and systematic benevolence. "Freely ye have received—freely give. How does the world know you are a Christian? Have you ever spoken a word for Christ to an unconverted soul? Do your religious duties take the precedence of all others. Are you ready to tell others what Christ has done for you, or as a dumb dog, are you silent when all around are speaking of God's mercies. You will say perhaps I am leaving my subject, viz: (systematic giving) with all deference I maintain that systematic service and waiting and honouring God to the best of our ability is as necessary to the welfare of our immortal souls, as giving of our gold or silver. We have certain hours of every day in which we attend to particular duties, and certain days in every week during which we give attention to different schemes of business. System and order must be diligently kept up, or disappointment and disorder will ensue. Life must have a proper aim, spiritual character and godly results to fulfil its high commission. There are endless ways of occupying it, of spending its opportunities and consuming its powers, but then there is only one of meeting the ends for which we were created, and for fully enjoying the blessings which a well spent life will secure even in this world. Many choose the path which gratifies self and only look to time for all comfort and joy, but such a life dishonours God and ends in misery. What an encouragement to do good with wealth and talents is afforded by reading the lives of devoted servants of God. We read of their patience and faith under severe trials and times of darkness, and the question is pressed home to our hearts "How much owest thou unto my Lord."

Chosen not for good in me, wakened up from wrath to flee
 Hidden in the Savior's side, by the Spirit sanctified,
 Teach me Lord on earth to show, By thy love how much I owe,
 Oft I walk beneath the cloud, Dark as midnight's gloomy shroud,
 But when fear is at its height, Jesus comes and all is light,
 Blessed Jesus! bid me show, Doubting saints how much I owe.—COPIED.

The God man walked through a sinful world and in the likeness of sinful flesh "And was not ashamed to call us brethren." By prayer and exercise strengthen the gifts which are in you that you may adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things, and by a useful life "labour among men." See to it that you use in the best way what God has given. Some bury their talents and hide their Lord's money, produce nothing to his honour, and have little or no pleasure in His service. These can have none of the comfort of the self-denying Christian, for they pamper self and know nothing higher than selfish gratification.

"I care for no titles that are not my right
 No honour that is not my due
 But stand in my station by day and by night,
 The will of my Master to do.
 He lent me my lot be it humble or high
 And set me my business here,
 And whether I live in thy service or die
 My heart shall be found in my sphere.
 If wealthy—I stand as the steward of my King
 If poor—as the friend of the Lord,
 If feeble—my prayers and my praises I bring,
 If stalwart my pen or my sword.
 If wisdom be mine I will cherish His gift,
 If simpleness—bask in His love
 If sorrow—His hope shall my spirit uplift
 If joy I will throne it above.

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When Jesus says to each of us, (thou owest me thyself), He asks that our souls should be rendered up to him as blank sheets to be filled as He pleases. That is self surrender, and one of the things sure to be written there is our entire submission to His will. This is a severe test, for we all love to have our way. Our own way is apt to be a very crooked and erratic path; branching here and there as inclination, self-interest, or worldly pleasure sway our minds; but God's will is in the straight and narrow way that leads to peace, security, rest, happiness. Remember, we are but Stewards and a true and faithful account of our improvement or neglect of our opportunities of honouring God with the best of possessions, (for from Him all come) will be called for from us.

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CONSIDERATION OF SOME OF THE SCHEMES OF CHRISTIANITY WORTHY THE CONTINUED AND INCREASED SUPPORT OF CHRISTIANS.

1st.—GOD'S HOUSE AND HIS SERVICES.

The age in which we live, is certainly a progressive one. Steam engines, railways, telegraphs, have become necessary to success in business. In ten years railway traffic has more than trebled, and telegraphic communication has increased quite as much. Post Office increase appears almost incredible. Every man engaged in the busy walks of life makes the most of time and opportunities, if he hopes for success. Time in point of fact is money, therefore he travels "Express," writes by "Telegraph," prints by Steam. Utility is taught in all things and commercial towns are the outcome of enterprise, utility, and thorough business habits combined and intensified. The church also partakes of this feature of the world, hence organizations, societies, schemes, which later times have developed require a large amount of practical skill and earnest labor, for the carrying out of them to a successful issue. Usefulness is a characteristic of Christianity, hearts are anxious, hands are busy and many are wearing their lives away in striving to make the most of present opportunities, of following the master's example and "doing good." Every Christian is required to become a worker, there must be no drones in God's hive. The need is far greater than the supply. If any are idle in the vineyard, it is their own fault and certainly not from want of opportunity or obligation. "The harvest truly is plentiful but the labourers are few," Let us pause for a short time and examine the true source of Christian usefulness. It is given us by St. Paul in writing of the Macedonian converts "They first gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God." Self-dedication is the main-spring of Christian benevolence and usefulness. When a soul, weary and sick, has been brought to Christ and feels its sins forgiven and washed away, the strongest emotions of love and gratitude take hold of the heart "What can I do for Jesus" is the question

that comes first. The work of Christ in saving, is "redemption by purchase," the price paid, His precious blood. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." The believer owes all to Jesus, and hopes all from Him. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? should be the language of his heart and the motive power of his actions. This was the way the Macedonian converts acted. It was a thorough and hearty dedication of themselves and their belongings to Jesus. Let us see how we stand as to systematic giving with regard to our churches, and again we turn to the Israelite and take a lesson; seeing how they esteemed the temple or as we speak of our places of worship (churches). A Jewish boy of twelve years of age, was expected to understand the whole law of Moses, and hence was well and thoroughly conversant with the law of Tithes; taking as it does so prominent a place in the Mosaic economy: and showing that God's claim on him must be met and honoured. While Christian parents in their homes instil the same teachings, the Sabbath School the nursery of the Church comes to the front, and the teacher has a precious opportunity of leading the lambs of the flock into green pastures of tender grass, by telling of *Jacob's dream*, *Abram's faith*. The babe of Bethlehem, and all the other stories of the Bible then pointing them to the many comforts they possess compared with others, impress upon their minds "To whom much is given, of them much will be expected." And again, Christ gave His life for them, what have they given to Him? Encourage them to save something from self-indulgence and to bring it to the Sabbath School as their weekly offering towards God's work and acknowledgment that all their comforts come from His loving care. There are many ways in which we can assist to make our Church well-organized and successful; and first let each member resolve to do his or her duty (irrespective of what others may do) as to God and not to man. The place where we worship, (be it large or small) should be very dear to us, for though God is not confined to "temples made with hands," yet we know that He will meet with and give special blessings in the assembly of His saints. Bethel must have been very dear to Jacob's heart; and has not God's house, frequently proved a very Bethel to our souls? Let us dwell for a short time on the vast preparations made by David for the building of the first temple. Truly he deemed no gift too costly. We read "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is yet young and tender and the work is great, for the palace is not for man but for the Lord God. Now I have prepared with all my

might for the house of my God; the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things to be made of silver, and brass for things of brass; the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood. Onyx stones and stones to be set: glistening stones and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones and marble stones in abundance." "Moreover because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, even three thousand talents of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the house withal, the gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord." "Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the kings, offered willingly, and gave for their service of the house of God, of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy." Wherefore David blessed the Lord and all the congregation and dedicated the offering to Him. Chron. 29th. The next five verses acknowledge God's sovereignty over all thus, "Of thine own have we given thee." They did not rest satisfied with giving a tenth, no—to their praise be it said they gave lavishly and with cheerful hearts and willing hands. Now glance at the costly gifts that always adorn the mosques and temples of idolators, they are ornamented with the most valuable and richest gifts, proving that every heart holds dear the place where they worship their God, whether it be the only living and true God, or an idol made of wood or stone, the work of men's hands. Now while Christianity is opposed to the pomp and glitter of outward show, yet Christian places of worship should always be freed from debt, before being consecrated to the service of God. Is it not an insult to the Most High to expect Him to accept and honour with His presence a building set apart for His glory, with a debt resting on it? Can we forget that the silver and the gold are His, and are hoarded up or spent to pamper or decorate these bodies of ours. I

cannot forbear giving a case in point which I have recently read, in a book entitled "Doing good," George B. Thorneycroft, Ironmaster, a native of Tipton, Staffordshire, his education was neglected, but one mode of instruction failed not, a mother's unwearied efforts taught him the Holy Scriptures, and his tenacious memory retained the incorruptible seed until he died. "In the early part of his career, he was connected with a Wesleyan chapel upon which a heavy debt lay. This pressed heavily upon Mr. Thorneycroft; disturbing his nights and disquieting his days, at last he was determined to make a strenuous effort to obtain its liquidation; and after tossing in his bed much of the night, he was refreshed in the morning by the determination at which he had arrived." "He at once set about taking stock of iron, and drawing a balance, he, without hesitation paid off the whole amount—a very considerable sum to him in those days, in which his success was only beginning to develop itself. Providence after this seemed indeed to smile upon him, and he dated his great success in after life from this event." Here we have the true principal of liberality. It was his own; it was first fruits; it was for Christ; and it blessed him that gave as well as the cause that was immediately benefited by his prompt action. As regards our duty to our churches, it is certainly requisite that the financial expenditure should have a firm basis. Every member should know what sum he can give each Sabbath and this being done (by aid of the envelope system) the elders, stewards, deacon, or by whatever name they may be called, know exactly what sum they have to work with and govern themselves accordingly. We all want a clever, well educated man for our minister, but how few of us take into consideration, the years of study and research occupied in preparing to preach the Gospel. And in many cases how inadequate the salary he receives. A mechanic often getting nearly double the amount. A pastor's study should be well supplied with the best literature, in order to keep up with the various vital questions and circumstances of the religious world. He should have at hand all the recent missionary and other records. We must honour God's servant and give kindness, consideration, respect and Christian love. Do not encourage a fault finding captious spirit. Meet him with sympathy, help him in his work, encourage him to feel he is surrounded by friends willing to be co-workers with him in winning souls for Christ. See to it that we give ourselves first and all the rest will follow. Be in earnest, be diligent, be courteous to strangers, and strive to draw them to the Saviour with the bands of love let your manner be such that

others taking notice of you may see you have been with Jesus," and "glorify your father in heaven." That church in which there are opposing forces cannot be a success. Practice the charity that thinketh no evil and like Aaron and Hur of old, "Hold up the pastor's hands." A successful church must be a missionary and aggressive church, battling for the right and bearing aloft the blood stained banner of the cross. Here we are far advanced in the nineteenth century and I ask, how many of our pastor's are supported and strengthened by the ready sympathy and earnest prayers of their flock for God's blessing to rest upon their labours and that souls may be won by their ministrations. As to salary, no matter what private property your minister may possess, your duty is to pay him according to the position he holds and the provision should be as generous as possible that his mind may be freed from groveling care about the needs of his family, remember the "Labourer is worthy of his hire," and Scripture speaks very plainly on this subject and with no uncertain sound, while such texts as the following can be found. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charge." "Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof," or "who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" "Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar. Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel live of the Gospel." The only inference to be drawn from this passage, is not that the Christian ministry is of a sacrificial character as the Jewish priesthood, but simply that as the latter was supported by the contributions of the people, so should the former. The stipends of the clergy were at first from voluntary offerings at the Lord's supper; at the love feast previous to it, every believer according to his ability, offered a gift, and when the expenses of the Table had been defrayed, the remainder was divided. A certain portion to the bishop, presbyters, deacons and then to the relief of the widows, orphans and poor generally. Rev. A. R. Fausset, A. M., Barnes, thus paraphrases and comments on the first of these verses. If we (Paul says of ministers) have been the means of imparting to you the gospel, and bestowing upon you its high hopes and privileges, "Is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things." Is it to be regarded as unequal, unjust or burdensome? Is it to be supposed that we are receiving that for which we have not rendered a valuable consideration? The sense is, we

impart blessings of more value than we receive. We receive a supply of our temporal wants. We impart to you under the Divine blessing, the gospel with all its hopes and consolations. We make you acquainted with God, with the plan of salvation. We instruct your children, we guide you in the path of comfort and peace; we raise you from the degradation of idolatry and sin; and we open before you the hope of the resurrection of the just, and of all the bliss of heaven." Extract Gold and Gospel. After reading these extracts who can shut their eyes to the plain duty of the members of a church to support liberally and encourage lovingly the shepherds who have the oversight of the various churches, and who are labouring faithfully in the Lord's vineyard; spending and being spent in His service and for our benefit. We expect our minister to take an active part in every benevolent cause, let us see to it that his usefulness is not injured by want of means. In our times of sadness and sorrow, we look for his sympathy and advice, and never is it withheld; but how apt Christians are to take for granted that the pastor's heart is enjoying all the repose and comforts of which he tells us so sweetly and beseeches God so earnestly to bestow upon us, oh! give more heart, more love, more prayer, that the man of God may feel that the supplications of his congregation ascend like incense to the Throne of Grace in his behalf. Give a careful, considerate, patient and intelligent attention to his sermons, bring a teachable, humble spirit and ask that food convenient for every waiting soul may be there. What know you of the hours of prayer and careful study that discourse has taken, the wearied brain, the aching heart, as the coldness and apathy of some of the members comes to mind: the levity of others, the inconsistency of nearly all. Above everything the dread of being an unfaithful watchman, a shepherd whose flock wanders upon the mountains of *worldliness*, pride and expediency, "Who is sufficient for these things, bursts from his lips, as he anxiously considers and expresses the feelings prompted by the test under consideration.

PREPARING FOR SABBATH.

The minister sat in his study chair,
The Bible the chief of books were there,
But before he began to study,—he bowed
In a prayer for help to the preacher's God.

A great many texts passed through his mind
Before he a suitable one could find.
Perchance some longing anxious soul,
Is waiting for Jesus to make it whole,

The erring soul or trembling one
Must be warned or pointed to the Son,
The thoughtless and gay must have warning given,
That straight is the path that leads to heaven.

The young must hear that they must die,
Though health in their veins be running high
The rich be told their wealth is vain,
In a dying hour to soothe their pain,

With words of comfort the poor to cheer,
Their wants and trials oft greet his ears,
Again at the Throne of Grace he pleads
For strength to supply his people's needs.

Out of God's storehouse full and fair,
But how to divide, that each his share
May have the portion his God would give
Of the Bread of Life that all may live.

The Holy Spirit with quickening power,
Is there to bless—that sacred hour,
Effectual are the earnest prayers,
Of the pleading hearts by the study chairs.

Nearly nineteen centuries have passed since Jesus sent forth his disciples to evangelize the world. Their commission "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28th, 19, 20. And now in these latter days, a want is felt, an essay asked for, that may rouse Christians to a fuller sense of their absolute duty to give a regular, liberal and distinct portion of time, talents, money, to the support of the worship of the one living and true God. The pleasant and successful working of the schemes of the church can only be carried on by the certainty of a reliable and generous financial fund from which they can be sustained by systematic giving. We have considered the claims of our church, let us take up one of her principal schemes namely, missions and missionaries. A successful church must be a missionary church, that is she must be an aggressive power in the world. Think of the millions on the face of the earth, who have never yet heard the gospel sound: know nothing of their need of Jesus, their lands filled with the abomination of Idolatry and darkness of heathenism. Open your purse strings—bring out your cheque books, and if you cannot go yourselves and carry the glad tidings, give freely to those who are willing to leave

home, friends, all, yes even life itself that Christ may be glorified and the dark places of the earth be illumined with the rays of the Son of Righteousness. Man of the world, bring your treasure with you, consider what has been done to rescue you from death eternal, and hear the famished, perishing souls cry "Come over and help us." If you want a rich blessing scatter, scatter abroad, and sow the seed of self-denial, the bread cast upon the waters will return after many days, freighted with rich blessings from heaven. How can the missionary spirit be made more general amongst us, I say we must begin at the beginning and take the nurseries. Teach the children from the early dawn of intelligence how much they owe to God. The mother's love can be made the medium for the first lessons. The child loves its mother and that love becomes the motive power of obedience. The mother speaks of God's love and as proof of it points to the many comforts the little one has. Mother, father, home: God gave it all these things. Parents look to it that ye point your little ones to Him as their loving, merciful, father supplying all their wants through you as His appointed means. When old enough, tell of God's greatest and best gifts, even Jesus, and encourage them to give up some gratification that they may be able to contribute towards sending help to other little ones, (less highly favoured) living and knowing nothing of "Him who died for them." A child's heart is soft and easily swayed, by kindly words and feelings. O write nothing on these pure tablets, but stories of the Lamb of God, His innocence, His love, His patience, His kindness to the little ones, His sympathy and relief for all. Let the voice of joy be in your dwelling and hymns of praise burst from childhoods lips. Too young to understand you say! you teach them and God's glory will be all the greater and brighter for your efforts. The ark will be taken care of. Children are precious gifts and it is to them the well being of our churches and missions will be entrusted, when the fathers and mothers of to day have passed away, and their actions whether selfish or otherwise, have gone before them to the judgment. Blessed result if in our case the master says "She hath done what she could." A man taught from childhood to give a portion of his money or services to God, will never shake off the feeling of responsibility, although he may not always fulfil its demands, therefore again I repeat, encourage a faithful and intelligent benevolence towards missions, churches and whatever schemes appear most important or effectual towards hastening the time, when the "knowledge of God shall cover the whole earth," From time to

time we read of large bequests to each and all of these schemes ; the majority of people are unable to give largely but very few if any are so poor as to be unable to give one cent a day. Some will perhaps scoff at such an offering, but if that were done by those on the roll of the Methodist church alone, not including Sabbath Scholars who are members and a few who are very very poor, a sum for missionary purpose, \$693,500 ; would be forthcoming, each member merely giving one cent a day. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Our duty as professing Christians appears very plain. Means must be provided, men must be sent, (God finding them) for how otherwise are the nations of the earth to become Christianized or be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Yet some will say, why bother about the heathen ? they know no better, and will only be judged by the light they have, you will only increase their responsibilities by telling them of the Saviour, God and Heaven. Begone such sophistry. The *glad tidings*, was to be sent to all nations and God has promised Jesus "the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for His possession."

Waft, waft ye winds our story,
And you ye waters roll,
Till like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole.
Till o'er our ransomed nature,
The lamb for sinners slain
Redeemer, King, Creator
Returns in bliss to reign.

Let us glance at a few of the missions and see what encouragement we find to go on with the work, *Japan*. "the 38,000,000 of Japan are neither ignorant or degraded as regards natural or intellectual civilization. "And no people on the face of the earth presents so remarkable an opportunity for speedy Christianization as Japan. Until forty years ago the people were kept in almost absolute seclusion developing within themselves a quaint civilization largely on the Chinese model. Think of 168 churches being founded in thirteen years, fifty-seven of which are self-supporting, and the rest rapidly rising into self-support—twelve thousand members, over one-fourth of whom were brought in during the past year. Dr. Cochran writes "Press, press, impress the truth on the mind and heart of Canadian Methodism that now is the golden opportunity in Japan, a few thousand dollars and a few more men at once, is worth more in the service of the crown and kingdom of

Jesus, our Saviour and Lord, than millions of money and an army of men by and by." Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God. It would be a blessing if some special plea or call could be made effectual in arousing the church out of her apathy, getting her out of the rut of meagre givings until she should emulate her master in practical sympathy for a lost world. Rescue the perishing, care for the dying. In face of a work so vast, (a world to be won for Christ,) the mighty responsibility that rests on Christendom as a whole, and on each individual as part and parcel of that whole, how pitiful and contemptible the excuses behind which men strive to shelter themselves. Christ did redeem us, He emptied himself of all but love, that we might have a mansion in heaven. He sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts witnessing with our spirits as to our Sonship. This has he done for us. What have we done for Him. Do not shirk the question. Does your heart answer I have done all I can. I have denied myself all the luxuries of life, and some of its necessities, that I might have to give or send to those who need, I am earnest in praying for the success of missionaries and missions that the dark places may be illumined by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and the abodes of cruelty and superstition become the habitation of the Prince of Peace. If as in God's sight you can answer yes—well; if not remember the day of reckoning is soon to come and sins of omission will be punished as well as sins of commission. "In as much as ye did it not." The mission ground embraces the whole world, for the commission was to all nations, how small a beginning, what stupendous results. Will you not use extra efforts, that more labourers may go forth to the harvest. You have home claims you say, and cannot give much to foreign missions, well just deal justly or as you will wish you had judged when you come to die. Analyze these claims, are they those of the outcast, the fallen, the degraded, if they are see to it how you meet them for they are home missions, although to people who know (by the ear at least) the sound of the "church going bell," and who most certainly are steadily refusing the call of salvation. The various agencies such as Benevolent societies, blind asylums, institutions for the deaf and dumb, orphans home, industrial or reform school and many others, have all deep and worthy claims for support on a christian community. Few persons can give to all and therefore I would beg, an earnest, prayerful and thorough investigation of the claims of each and all and then a generous share to those you prefer. I must not omit the Y. M. C. A. in the list of worthy objects. The association

requires no word of praise from me, its young men have gone away and after a very short time we hear of them working for Jesus among strangers. I meant to give statistics of each of the most important mission stations but for the present I will but mention a few. The missions to India, China, North-west, Polynesia: the reports from the different churches should be attentively read by us, as we thus get a birds eye view of the work with less trouble and more reliability than in any other way. No character can be called Christian unless love be its essence and mainspring. In no section of God's vineyard is this more required than in the Sabbath School. Time, prayer, mind, must all be given in preparation: patience, hope, faith, must all be called into activity: and eternity alone will reveal, how largely the work of one humble faithful Sabbath School teacher may have furthered the coming of Christ's kingdom on earth or how many jewels it has won for His crown. The child passes from the primary through the intermediate classes till from the Bible class he becomes a teacher himself and imparts to others instruction in the word of God. Again the child is early taken from the Sabbath School to the church, joins in the outward worship of God, again hears that a stated portion of time is His: and cannot be spent in idleness or folly without breaking the command, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. The boy or girl reasons thus, God must own me, if he claims my time, my means, my heart, and as years are added and deeper reasoning, the word comes with power, and giving up all for Christ! "I am not my own, I am bought with a price" bursts from his lips, angels rejoice that another soul is won for Christ who sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. A faithful Sabbath School teacher is a missionary in the true sense of the word, she brings the knowledge of God to the Lambs of the fold, she nurtures them on the pure milk of the word even the plain story of the cross, they are too young to argue, and accept with implicit faith the story of Calvary. I have already alluded to the mission to Japan and its marvellous success. I have just been reading the life of Rev. John Geddie, first missionary to the New Hebrides; what zeal, what patience, what endurance, what living epistle of a Christian soldier bearing the heat and burden of the day. What a reason that more means should be forthcoming to keep up and extend the work still to be done that other places may "know the joyful sound." On his landing in 1848 there were no Christians there, when he left in 1872, there were no heathen, what a monument to the faithfulness of his life and service. He died in Australia in 1872. Let not

missions languish for want of means. Hear the cries that come from heathen lands, think of the time that has passed since Christ sent forth the first missionaries to preach and baptize and promised to be with them always. Now then where is the Lord's bag, purse, bank or whatever you may call it, are you keeping it well supplied with funds taken from luxury, self-indulgence, worldly amusements or outward adorning. You cannot perhaps go from home yourself, then do the next best thing, and help those who are both willing and anxious to do so. They are willing to leave home, civilization, friends, country, *all* for what, the dark abodes of wickedness, ignorance and sin, where life is counted as of small value, and morality is unknown. It is impossible for us to understand how thoroughly revolting to an educated and christian mind intercourse with such fallen and degraded beings must be, but notwithstanding all this, the missionary sees in each, a sinner for whom Christ died and an immortal soul perishing, which he came to save. Again I would ask you to turn to the wives of missionaries and let conscience answer the question. Do I love Jesus as these women do? could I make the sacrifices they do for Christ. Now money must be expended on these missions continuously till they become self-supporting, and in their turn send help to weaker brethren. Some members murmur at the many calls made upon them. Well have God's bag at hand and you will nearly always have enough to meet expected calls and for extra ones be willing to deny yourselves that you may enjoy to the full the luxury of giving. Men! women! "strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die." You do not want any mission to be given up, from want of funds. Rouse yourselves and be equal to the emergency. Ask God to send men and all Christendom supply the silver and gold. Up and be doing, more faith, more union, more brotherhood, more love to God and man. "Pray ye the Lord to send labourers into his vineyard." Aim at such a standard of benevolence as shall attract to the religion you profess, many who had seen no loveliness in it before. A gentleman in India was conversing one day with a missionary "are you really in earnest in saying your people who sent you here to preach to us, love Jesus?" The missionary replied in the affirmative. "Well he said if troops are wanted to defend any city over which England has control, they come by hundreds, if there is a vacancy in the civil service list there are hundreds of applicants, but in this country where millions have never heard of a Saviour I see you here, another missionary 150 miles from this, and another fifty or one hundred miles further still. I don't understand how they can

love Jesus as you say they do, and not come or send us preaches?" Pertinent question and one that should cause us all to stop and take thought before we answer. Love is the fulfilling of the law. The commission is to preach the gospel "to every creature." Do not forget this injunction while there is one human being to whom the glad tidings of great joy have never been told, our commission is not executed and we as unfaithful watchmen are allowing fellow men to perish eternally, without having heard of the name of Jesus. It is very nice to be enthusiastic at missionary meetings, but when the collection is taken up, how many give according to their means? how many accompany the gift with prayer for its success? how many just put a few cents on the plate with a complacent smile as they say to themselves "I'll give them my mite." Again I repeat God can do without you or your money and if you do not want to give, say so, but be honest. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." We all feel a generous warmth as we sing, "Waft, waft, ye winds the story,"

But do the winds waft the story. No, the story must be told by human lips to reach human hearts. Half the race of men to-day are without the knowledge of God through the plan of redemption. Go then and sow, not sparingly but bountifully and systematically. Cast your treasure out of your sight into the broad sea of the church's needs, leave it there unseen in the soil of eternity, even here the fruit will be peace of mind and joy in the Holy Ghost, and when the harvest sets in many will wish they had followed your example. Before I leave this branch of benevolence I would speak a few words for Home Missions. We are certainly brought into contact with the last, for it is in our midst. What need some will say of home missions. There are Churches and Sabbath Schools let them attend them and get instruction. There are some who have no wish or thought of a better life; they hug the chains that are dragging them to perdition, they feel no need of Christ for their conscience is seared as with an hot iron. Be up and, doing go yourselves and see the misery that follow lives of sin. No you say, you could not go to such places, your respectability might be assailed, your good name suffer, well put away a certain sum towards paying a missionary to do your work for you. Let him be liberally supplied for the wants are many in some of the places where the world, flesh and devil are holding high carnival. You join with fervour in singing such hymns as those, "Rescue the perishing," and "Work for the night is coming," but I fear there are a good many professing Christians who prefer talking a senti-

mental religion and whining about all being miserable sinners yet doing nothing to make the world better, for having lived in it. Ye hypocrites, make the inside clean and fit to be the dwelling place of God's Holy Spirit, lay aside selfishness, covetousness, which is idolatry and try to win some from the way of sin to the knowledge of God as a merciful father in Christ. "Encourage Home Missions," support them liberally, assist in the working and cheer and help any who are trying to break the thralldom of sin to get into the liberty of a child of God. Be co-workers with Christ and nothing shall interfere with the joy you will derive from sending the glad tidings to others.

THE POOR.

The poor are a precious legacy left among us—to use the Master's words "that we may do them good." Yet I do not think for one moment this meant to pauperise them, on the contrary Christ never denied to the poorest the luxury of giving, and it is a very great benefit to teach a poor man to save something to give away, it increases his self-respect, and will exercise a restraining influence on all his expenditure. "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and what he hath given will he pay him again." Prov. 19th, 17. There are some persons who will object to this text, it jars upon their consciences for its teachings are very plain upon the subject. The poor are left among us as the Lord's representatives and collectors; they come to us as messengers from Him who gave us all. The poor are our tests or trials. The Lord tries our profession and our principles by them. He calls giving to the poor lending to Himself. And every kind action or benevolent gift is placed to our account in God's bank and be assured will bring good interest. "He that giveth to the poor shall not lack." Prov. 28th, 27. "He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he." Prov. 14th, 21. "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor." Prov. 22nd, 9. The kindness of those that scatter and spread among the poor the necessities they require, with a generous hand and a loving cheerful heart will have its reward and tenfold returned to them in the present time, man will bless him, and God will bless him too. Kindness will be returned as Joseph returned his brethren's money in their sacks. "Cast thy bread upon the water; for thou shalt find it after many days." Yes, nothing is ever lost that is given from love to Christ; and with a single eye to His glory. God is a bounteous receiver

although the poor ones relieved may be ungrateful, therefore while their conduct should make us careful, His promise should keep us benevolent. In giving to the poor as you have means and opportunity, do it from love to Jesus, respect to the command and authority of God, and faith in His gracious promise. Christ and His people are one. The tie that binds them can never be severed and when His poor ones are pinched by poverty and needing some relief, when persecuted and oppressed, surely! surely? the promised followers of the Master, who feel they are saved should come to the rescue with time, money, talents and whatever may be required. God will repay him for He condescendingly considers the interests of the poor as if they were His own. And Christ pledges Himself to reward the smallest service rendered to the humblest of His disciples. Therefore in all our systematic giving be sure that the claims of the poor are met and honoured. God's servants are frequently found among the poorest and humblest of earth's children, the valley is better for them and their Heavenly Father knows just where they are and whose duty it will be to provide for or comfort them. The poverty of the poor is his destruction. The wants and deprivations the poor are subjected to expose them to many temptations and if they fall it is the Christian's duty to try and raise them up. O be ready, willing and earnest. Jesus was poor. "He had not where to lay His head," "for our sakes He became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." Do we want anything further, to make us feel our responsibility as regards assisting to the best of our ability for "when ye will ye can do good unto them." The silver and the gold are God's and if He entrusts a portion of it to your keeping remember you will have to give an account of your Stewardship.

Help the feeble ones along, cheer the faint and weak
To the sorrow laden heart, words of comfort speak,
Freely, freely, from the bounty of your store,
Cheerful givers—help the humble poor.

SAVING IN GENERAL.—SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE.

In considering giving both as regards God and man, we must revert to the promises already touched upon and proved from Scripture, leaving man without excuse if he continues proud of his possessions or covetous in hoarding them. From God they came and His right is forever. Nothing is ours to deal with irrespective of his claim, and by precept and example all through God's word, this is the teaching. Not our own, not mine but God's. We proved that God claimed not less than a tenth from the Israelites, and those living in Gospel times should surpass but most certainly not go below that sum. Then came man's indebtedness and responsibility, recipient of God's mercies from the cradle to the grave, they were proved to be only stewards who would be called to account for the use they had made of the talents committed to their charge. Christian reader! what a noble destiny is yours. As man, you are endowed with faculties and feelings and have a position and work calling for and requiring gifts that come from God alone. The most useful gifts are those we can utilize the most for God's glory and the benefit of our fellow men. By prayer and exercise strengthen the powers that are yours, that you may "adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things," by a useful and devoted life. See to it that your talents are not buried, as some hide their Lord's money. Producing nothing to His honour, and having no joy in His service. Empty cisterns are they, for they have none of the satisfaction of the busy, self-denying Christian, who loving his Master above everything else, goes about speaking a word of comfort to the weary and disheartened one, cheering the fallen by encouraging them to give up sin and turn to their once crucified but now risen Lord. There were three special events in which the Jews came up with the choicest and most precious gifts. "I have seen with joy the people do offer willingly unto thee." Chron. 29th, 17. The giving of a tenth was by no means intended by God as the limit of Jewish liberality. There were among the Jews men who would accept no limit to their bounty where God's cause was the object and considered themselves highly honoured in being allowed to contribute towards it. It is a retrospect fraught with varied feelings of pleasure and pain, to look back to the time when

one feeling and one mind seemed to actuate ancient Israel. Pleasing as we see, from the King on the Throne, to the poorest in the realm, bringing the best and most costly gifts they could procure and pouring them into God's treasure house. Self appears to have been conquered, it was for Jehovah they did it and nothing would be too costly. Each of the events to which I have alluded, were raising a house for God. 1st. Tabernacle in the wilderness when Israel in poverty and wanderings gave to the utmost of their ability. 2nd. The building of Solomon's Temple which I described in an earlier portion of this essay, the people required to be restrained from instead of being urged to give. How strange, and painful the contrast between then and now. The third instance was the building of the second temple. In these days of covetousness and self-indulgence, just imagine people having to be told to bring no more offerings to God's house. Nor did the Jews for one moment consider that their lavish generosity made Jehovah their debtor in any respect. It is in these times alone that the claim of human merit is urged. And David expresses the feeling of every humble Christian heart, "Of thine own have we given thee." The free will offerings differed from the tenth, it was not expected from all the people, and even where it was expected there was no rule as to how much or how little should be given, that was left to the discretion of the giver. What a man gave willingly God accepted; but when the willing spirit ceased, the offering was not urged. It was said to him as to Christians afterwards. Let every man do as he is disposed in his heart, not "grudgingly nor of necessity." "Give a portion to seven and also to eight; if the clouds be full of rain they empty themselves upon the earth." Seven the number of perfection, eight or many in need, the day may be near when you may need the help of those we have bound to us by kindness. The very argument which covetous men use against liberality, the wise man uses for it, clouds meaning evil. Now is the time for liberality before the evil days. Therefore sow thy charity in faith, without doubt or hesitation and the bread cast upon the waters will return with increase when God wills. Our benevolence should and must be judiciously given if we want to be really useful to the aged, sick, and industrious poor, for we commit an offence before God if we encourage idleness. A good man would much rather earn what he requires, here is where helping hands and kind hearts come in, if we cannot know the circumstances of those we relieve, employ others to dispense our charity first enquiring into the truth or urgency of the cases. Let us consider for a few minutes the case

of the ten lepers, all healed by Jesus, yet only one returned to give thanks. Are we not sometimes like these men. We know God's grace has come to us, and we are saved through Jesu's blood. Yet how often we hold our tongues and act in such a cold constrained manner that many are inclined to doubt our conversion and the power of the Gospel. Where are the nine? the Master must often ask when His people assemble together to present their petitions at His Throne. Where are the nine? when His servants suffer persecution and no friend stands by them. Where are those who have been received and blessed by me. They ought to be first at the Throne of Grace, ready to help my poor, delighted to encourage my servants and pleased to assist my cause. Where are the nine? Some in the world, taken up with its cares and anxieties, devoted to pleasure or business, making haste to be rich, neglecting christian duties and bringing contempt upon the holy name whereby they are called? O fellow Christian be up and doing, are we in the path of duty? are all our powers engaged to help and strengthen the weak, comfort the sorrowing and devote all we have to glorify God. "To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." A working woman offered unsolicited \$4.00 towards a church fund, she was warmly thanked, but told that it could be obtained otherwise. She replied, "it is already devoted; if you do not take it, I shall have to find something else to give it to. I store the Lord's portion every Sabbath; out of 80 cents a week, another Christian laid aside 10 cents every Sabbath morning and was thus enabled to do many deeds of kindness and help in many a good cause. A little girl's occasional farthing put by, allowed her to bring 2s. 8d. to the mission fund, and so on—many instances could be given, where small savings got by self-denial have been the means of helping poor and needy ones and bringing rich blessings to the give. Uncle Ben is strongly persuaded that God's work will not be done, while Christians refuse to give in small sums more frequently. "Littles often given to God will do for His glory, what small sums given to God at long intervals will never do." Go out into the poorest portions of your cities or towns, you will find plenty to give a sensitive heart many a shock, but do not go merely to see the misery. Take present relief with you to meet present needs, then give time and attention, and under God's help bring a blessing to those you visit. Tell them of the full and rich blessings in store for them if they will hear and accept the Saviour's invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," be of those whose mantle of charity is

large enough to cover a multitude of sins, by converting a sinner from the evil of his way and saving a soul alive. Christians are members one of another, for they are one in Christ, and their aims should be one. Christians do not keep asking *what* shall I give, but just lay aside as God prospers you, do not wait till called upon to know what you can spare, but by a thoughtful and systematic taking stock as it were and having a good balance on the Gospel side, be ready and willing to come up to the help of the Lord. Be encouraged by the success of others, but do not rest satisfied till you have honestly given God His portion of your belongings. Let the only rivalry between Christ's followers be, as to who can do most for Him, and win sinners to quit their evil ways and turn to God for He will abundantly pardon. Strivings among brethren are unseemly. For the body is not one member but many, "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing. If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling. But now hath God set the members, every one of them *in* the body as it hath pleased Him, and if they were all one member where were the body? But now are they many members yet one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hands I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of thee: and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it or one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Thus argued the Apostle and it cannot fail to enforce earnest seeking and longing for the best gifts, for what purpose? Methinks the answer from each heart should be, that we use them to God's glory. Ingratitude towards those who have assisted and done us good is a crime of the blackest dye, (in the eyes of the worldly man) but when shown to God by the creatures of His hand, whose sustenance comes from Him, and every blessing they enjoy is a fresh token of His love and pity, what punishment does it deserve. Well may our tongues be silent and our heads bowed with shame, always receiving comforts, and health enabling us to enjoy them with others. Remember if our obligations to God are disregarded leanness will come upon our own souls, and defrauding our heavenly Father, will only result in defrauding ourselves, and being despoiled of what we already have. Liberality with God's blessing secures increase, while penuriousness instead of expected gain, brings poverty, and a warped and starved soul! Liberal souls water others and are themselves watered and refreshed by showers of

blessings from on high. The miser loses the chance of salvation though his wealth may be great: and loses his immortal soul through covetousness which is another name for Idolatry.

Talk not of talents; what hast thou to do?

Thy duty be thy portion—five or two.

Talk not of talents as thy duty done?

Thou hadst sufficient; were they ten to one.

It requires not great talents, splendid attainments, prominent position or large income to enable man or woman to be useful in the Lord's work, these are all valuable adjuncts but not necessities. For if there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not. You need not wait for an invitation or sphere, begin just where you are, keep a single eye to God's glory in everything; "commit your ways unto Him, and He will direct your path." Using the opportunities and abilities given you as consecrated to His service. O Christian brother, bring your thank offerings and lay them with all your heart before the Lord. Seek out the careless and ignorant ones, who are refusing His best gifts, thus pouring contempt upon and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. The Macedonians were in deep poverty, but there were some poorer than they. At Jerusalem in the midst of bigoted Jews the followers of Jesus had a hard struggle to subsist. It was the duty of fellow Christians to help them, and the church of Macedonia came up nobly to the front. They out of their poverty and up to their power, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves. The case was urgent, brethren were perishing, what they could do they did, to assist those whose need was greater than their own. The old adage was proved true "where there's a will, there's a way," and with souls newly conscious of the better life and burning with sympathy and desire to alleviate some of the distresses of those around them, (they gave to Him who had redeemed and made them sons of God, through belief in His name) for when we give to the distressed from love to Christ. He considers it as done to Himself, and a cup of cold water, becomes of value in His sight. Let us turn again to God's word, "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said it is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20th, 35. What kindly generous heart but can answer yes to this assertion, it is the weak and trembling who need support. The verse breathes the spirit of the Lord's life and doctrine and teaches those who have not to

labour from necessity, still to labour from benevolence that they may have to give to others. How few live up to this rule and yet it is but what Jesus did while He walked on earth, and the servant should be highly honoured in being permitted to follow the Master's steps. Wealth used for Christ with a heart only desirous of His glory will be enlarged and blessed, have greater power of doing good and greater interest in the various schemes assisted. Christian brother instead of imagining you are conferring a favor by using a portion of your money in God's service, believe me you are the honoured party, in being allowed to take a share in the glorious work of winning the world for Christ. Leave self out of the question and cheerfully strengthen the hands of these labouring in the cause, by placing means in their hands that will enable them to do the work. "Freely ye have received freely give." Nothing has been withheld from us by God that is essential to our salvation. What greater gift could have been given than "Jesus?" What brighter home could be promised than "Heaven?" What purer robe could have been provided than "Christ's righteousness." What more simple plan of salvation than "come for all things are ready." What more general invitation "whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." You may build a church or found an hospital, head subscription lists and spend your means to feed the poor and yet be devoid of the principal that would make these actions a sacrifice of sweet savour unto God. Splendid munificence may cause your name to be remembered and gratitude may raise a monument to your honour, but hear one word of warning. He that with neither money or possessions lays his heart upon the altar of Christ's love has a more lasting memorial and one that the countless ages of eternity will never lessen or mar. A little book called Aunt Parson's story is beside me, and shows how much individual effort can accomplish. The sum given weekly was not burdensome to any while few if any would have been able to pay \$20.80 at one time. I think the benefit and comfort derived from a stated consecration of a certain sum for the support and maintenance of the worship of God in our midst, and the spread of the glad tidings of salvation among the nations of the earth: is one of the noblest acts of the regenerated child of God. Life must have a proper aim, a spiritual character and those combined will produce godly results, thus fulfilling its high commission. Many and diverse are the ways of occupying and spending its opportunities and exhausting its powers. But there is only one way of meeting the ends for which it was given us, and freely enjoying the blessing which it is capable

of receiving. Many! how many choose the way which gratifies the flesh, but dishonours God and ends in misery. How great the encouragement to do good with wealth and talents, is afforded by reading the lives of devoted servants of God. It is a repetition of a question that cannot be too frequently pressed home, "How much owest thou unto my Lord."

Chosen not for good in me,
Wakened up from wrath to flee,
Hidden in the Saviour's side,
By the Spirit sanctified.
Teach me Lord on earth to show,
By thy love how much I owe.

Oft I walk beneath the cloud,
Dark as midnight's gloomy shroud,
But when fear is at its height
Jesus comes and all is light.
Blessed Jesus bid me show,
Doubting saints, how much I owe.—Copied,

Now that the world may believe that Christians are sincere in their professions and that religion is something more than a respectable garment, serving to go to church in but not to be taken into our week day labours or business, and there are hundreds to-day in our own city who would be brought nearer to Christ, if in their conscience they believed Christians sincere. All men have one deep instinct, it is this, that a man is sincere in what he will pay for and if they see religious men giving largely and cheerfully for their church, all doubts of their sincerity will be taken away. And surely those services or rites can be worth very little which are not worth paying for. Rise up ye Christian men and women who know God and acknowledge a kind and beneficent providence, rise up and let all see that when hard won gains are in your hand, you find your noblest and most enduring joy in scattering them abroad, to lessen or ameliorate some of the anxieties and sufferings of humanity. Alas for that home, at whose door the poor and famished never knock, and from which, a collector for any charitable purpose turns away, with a remark such as this, "no use to call there they always have so many calls upon their purses, they wonder where all the money goes to." The pleasant and successful working of the various schemes of our churches and organizations for the benefit of mankind, (by whatever name they may be called) can only be carried on by the certainty of a reliable and generous financial fund, from which they can be sustained, and this can only be obtained by systematic giving, spontaneous generosity

is often needed and called for to meet cases of exigency; and these will occur when the regular supply is insufficient to meet the demand and earnestly may we thank God that helping hands and hearts are always found when required. Each member of a benevolent society becomes an integral part of that society, and is related to the sick or needy brother. If his obligations are viewed aright he will hasten to comfort and relieve him. Sonship is ours through Christ our elder brother. The want of this feeling of brotherhood is a crying evil in our churches and throughout Christendom and by it many of our common humanity are permitted to perish miserably in ignorance, want, and squallor. Christians cannot the charge be laid at many of your doors. "Inasmuch as ye did it not" etc. Out upon such coldness, such indifference among the blood bought children of one common Father! Giving includes many many more things than mere money, which in reality is far less valuable. Make a practice of giving loving and gentle words, to those whose hearts are lonely and craving for sympathy, give ready and active assistance when required and do not be satisfied with saying, "How sorry I am," give time from your own ease and find out how this one's burden can be made lighter and that weak, trembling, erring brother or sister be strengthened and encouraged, again to try to keep from temptation and win for themselves once more a name and place of respectability among men and hope of eternal life through an ever kind, loving and willing Saviour. If these things are so and God's loving gifts are offered us thus abundantly shall we be satisfied with giving barely enough to keep our standing in the community as professing Christians. No, rather let our lives be a song of praise and our giving be that of heart and means consecrated to God's service. Must Christ work "who upholdeth all things by the word of His power," and must not we. Paul says "I laboured more abundantly than they all." Work, abundant labour is among the signs of an Apostle and signs of a Christian too, for the clearest evidence of Christian character is working for and giving to Christ. The story of the Scotch baron who tired and disheartened at some difficulties, decided to drown himself; when about plunging in, felt something pull him, turning round he saw a little girl who begged for help for a sick and dying mother. He took her by the hand, and went home with her, found misery, cold, hunger and approaching death. He gave relief received the mother's thanks and blessing and on his return to the stream, he said: "O foolish man! to think of taking my life when there is so much real joy to be found on earth. In giving happiness to this family

I have learned a new secret, that in giving to others, I am made rich myself." "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "I expect to pass through the world but once; if therefore, there can be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow human being, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again and time passed never returns." Let us give cheerfully therefore as God prospers us, and see the effect of our free will gifts, in His blessing on our means. Salvation is the free gift of God, and received by us through faith in Jesus Christ who brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel. It is the special privilege of Christians to be allowed to spread the glorious message "Peace on earth good will towards men," and by their walk and conversation, "let their light so shine that others taking knowledge of them may glorify their Father in Heaven." What an honour. To every creature God has given some work, suited to their powers and worthy of them. Man has the improvement of his mental powers, the task of self-cultivation and the raising himself step by step from a lower to a higher degree of excellence, no matter in what walk of life he may be engaged, and to Christians God has entrusted the recovery of the human race; from folly, sin and carelessness to the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus whom He has sent. Loving the Lord with all our heart, strength, mind, soul; and our neighbour as ourselves should be, but is not universally cherished. God has given an example of his intense love of man, in giving His son Jesus Christ, to die for us, and having given Him will certainly not withhold any good thing from those who love Him. Let us therefore put our love to Him beyond dispute. Do not be so worldly, so stingy, so careless, so cold, what after all do your gifts to God amount to, in nine cases out of ten, not an hundredth part of what you should give or what you spend on selfishness. "God is not mocked," what you sow you will surely reap and the harvest home will be a time of agony and remorse to many a soul whose aspirations after God have not been listened to, and whose possessor has turned the poor and needy from the door and spoken words of cruel cutting scorn to the erring one who has perchance been waiting for a kind word. Give love, and pure disinterested charity will be there. No matter how large your weekly subscription or donation may be, no matter though it embraces half your goods, no matter though you rise early to do good to others and visit the sick the fatherless and the widow, once more I repeat till you do all this and anything else from love to God, your offerings are of no good in His sight, with whom you

have to do. Settle this question at once and then having found Christ by blessed experience and realizing all He has done for you Go forth in His strength, beat down the enemy and with heart, life, substance, consecrated to His service, defeat will be impossible and a glorious scene will be witnessed of missions multiplying and flourishing, missionaries increased in number and better paid, encouraged by the prayers and systematic generosity of those who believe in and repeat, "Thy kingdom come." Home missions will then be a success for all Christians will do their utmost and the work while employing special labourers, will be partaken in by all. Gather the outcast, the fallen and lost. Remember Christ did not turn from the woman who was a sinner, though His pure spotless soul must have shrank from the contract. Yet—no, He hated the sin, but loved the sinner. Freely ye have received, freely give. Bring your offerings, support His cause, deal fairly and honestly with your responsibilities, study the working of the different societies having for their object the benefit of mankind and the spread of the Gospel, weigh their different claims, read the yearly reports and then distribute your means as you feel will be most to God's glory and your own satisfaction in that great day, when before the great white throne all must stand and give an account of their stewardship, to Him that sits upon the throne, and before an assembled world. No excuse will be made or received there. no claim of property or possessions thought of or allowed, no inability or poverty pleaded or listened to. No! naked and trembling, stripped of its own plausibility, the *covetous*, the idolator loving His gold (when on earth) more than he loved God or his fellow man will listen to his doom. "Inasmuch as ye did it not," etc. Fearful thought, all mankind will be ranged on either side of the Judge. Christian reader where will you be. The giving of our means to any object or society, certainly enhances our interest in that object and we instinctively pay greater attention when anything affects it than those in which we have no financial stake. Hence giving to missions both home and foreign increases our anxiety about their well-being and future success. The missionaries whom our money helped to fit out and send to their distant field of labour appear nearer and closer to our hearts, and while we pray for the success of missionaries in general, there is a greater warmth, a more earnest tone as we specially remember (our missionary) before the Throne of Grace. And so it is in every work. What we deny ourselves for : what we give our means to assist : what we see strengthened and growing to larger dimensions through con-

tinued liberality: will grow dearer and dearer to us as we feel more and more, the love of Christ constraining us. God demanded a tenth from the Jew and surely the ransomed "child of God," freed from the punishment of sin and made an heir of salvation through Christ "our elder brother" will not be satisfied with giving less than the Jew, who although highly honoured as God's peculiar people, saw but as through a glass the coming glories of the promised Messiah, and yet gave freely, willing, joyfully towards the support and continuance of the ceremonial dispensation. The recurrence of Sabbath has been specially spoken of by Paul. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." Cor. 16th, 2. Every one of you, must certainly include those in limited circumstances and we know by various instances that the offerings of the poor are specially acceptable to Christ. "The widow's offering of her all," the widow of Sarepta, the box of ointment all met His commendation. Every Christian is advised and exhorted to lay aside a certain portion every Sabbath for religious purposes, as God has prospered us. This practice persevered in will bring a rich blessing and when we are called upon for aid in any good cause, we will not have to make mean contemptible excuses. Professing Christians cease being a sham and pretence: practice the luxury of saving for and giving to Jesus and you will soon get out of the rut of worldliness, and living for self into the freedom and brotherhood of the early Christian church, where the rich had nothing over and the poor had no lack. From Acts 20th, 17, we find, that the first day of the week, as being the day of our Lord's resurrection, had become the customary day of assembling of the church and by the hallowed associations of the day each member should feel strongly impelled to help in supplying the wants of the needy or less fortunate ones and sending to others the bread and water of life. If this was done in the early dawn of Christianity, when Christ's followers were as a few isolated fishermen, sent on the broad ocean of a world's sin and indifference to catch souls for Christ, not with the words of man's wisdom, not with the pomp and glitter of wealth, but with humble garb and simple speech telling the thrilling story of the Cross, and pointing anxious ones to Jesus, having given up everything to follow the Lamb, what should we do who live in these days, when missions are established and intercourse possible with nearly every portion of the world. "Follow me," Jesus says to the Christian to-day as really as when he called the twelve. "Feed my sheep," "Feed my Lambs." "Lovest thou me." Solemn questions and must have an

honest answer, and those who can give it in the affirmative are the true nobility of mankind. They will work for the Saviour with honest true hearts, doing real and willing service now, with simplicity of character, purity of motive, integrity, energy, which give them a strong and wonderful influence for good. This influence urges to labour and prayer. The earnest prayerful men or women generally make the best workers. As a rule in Christian life, praying and working go together and this working leads to sacrifice for the need of funds is soon felt and ways and means must be found to supply them. And it is only when thus exercised that any true gratification is derived from property. How truly happy must he be whose great aim is the extension of God's praise, and who thus consecrates the earnings of brain, hands and lips to His glory. Our Heavenly Father makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and He would have us benevolent, useful, happy. Who would wish to live a higher life than to follow the example and prove by experience the truth of the words of Christ. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Glorious privilege (as far as we know) confined to man, of being able to give and see its good effects. To give as God prospers us from week to week will certainly cause a rich blessing to rest on the remainder, and again the more we give the more we will want to give, and there is that scattereth and yet leadeth to increase, for He that giveth liberally to the cause of religion will find a good pay master. As examples of generosity Paul proposes the Galatians to the Corinthians, the Corinthians to the Macedonians, and again the Corinthians and Macedonians to the Romans; thus provoking each to love and good works, without envy or uncharitableness let us strive to do good to those belonging to the household of faith; and try to relieve the burden of those whose hearts are bowed down with this world's troubles and cares. Bear in mind I have spoken of the Sabbath as the best day to lay by God's portion, but most surely it is not my intention to be understood as meaning it as the day to settle profit and loss, no, let that be ascertained before and then bring our gifts and present them as thank or free will offerings to the Lord of the Sabbath. A child of God, indifferent to the welfare and comfort of others! such a sight may well cause wonder in heaven. The gold and silver hoarded and the poor of the flock in distress. Fashionable churches and fine equipages to carry them thither, while the ignorant and heathen are perishing for the bread and water of life. Christian in name, for surely such you must be, if satisfied with this state of things. Not thus the Master taught when

on earth, and the example He set was of a very different stamp, and His followers who are sincere in their professions of love to His name are inspired with a readiness to be up and doing, discharging faithfully the various obligations of their position that they may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. God gives to us without adding anything that can impair the graciousness of the gift, let us be very careful that when we give to those who call upon us as collectors for the various missions or other schemes that our manner does not convey the impression that we grudge what we are ashamed to refuse. "As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men." Gal. 6th, 10. Distributing to the necessities of the saints, given to hospitality. We shall not always have the opportunity as it presents itself now, let us therefore take advantage of it and distributing the means, that have been entrusted to us, with cheerful heart and kindly words. We have in these two verses the rule of Christian life. Do we recognize our responsibility to publish by every means in our power and all possible agencies, the love of God as magnified in the gift of His son. Spread it by sending missionaries to distant lands to preach the Gospel of Peace. Employ home missionaries to search out and assist the fallen and outcast and bring them to a knowledge of the rich provision made for them if they will accept the gracious invitation "come for all things are ready," Find out the humble poor and consider them as Christ's special legacy to His church, feed the hungry, clothe the naked. As Christians this command must be honoured if followers of Jesus and resting your hope of eternal salvation in Him, can you hesitate for a moment regarding your duty to your poorer brother in the Lord. O! it was a glorious sight when Christ's Church was indeed one and had all things in common. And although this community of goods cannot be now, yet the same spirit of kindness and benevolence may be practised and encouraged. Bring all your offerings as your conscience urges and present them to the Lord. Let there be a thorough systematic provision made to meet the various calls you consider most worthy of continued assistance and by depositing weekly your donation there will be no confusion or surprise when called upon and none of the mean contemptible excuses for paltry giving will have to be made. We are stewards and can we with any honesty decline or safely continue to refuse faithful and constant dedication of ourselves, faculties and possessions to God. "A Jew might just as well go to his neighbour's house and help himself as withhold the tithe, and so the Christian when he hoards and refuses to scatter abroad of his abundance. The

objects requiring aid are so many and the claims of each and all are in general so strong, that some members of churches complain it is always giving. Yes, and so it should be—and will be—by every sincere lover of Christ, for it is always receiving, always being blessed, always kept and being safe for time and eternity if faithful. When God withholds His hand,—when the seasons cease to succeed each other—when the early and latter rain cease to fall, when prayers are unheard and unanswered, and man can live independent of Him in whom we live and have our being,—then let the covetous man rejoice in covetousness. And the miser hoard his gold. I have as yet not spoken of an object of vital importance to the well being of the church present and future. I mean “the education of young men for the ministry.” We have had some noble instances of generosity to this scheme, but it is one that requires a constant and increasing appropriation for its needs. The difficulties that many of our brightest and most effective preachers have met with and overcome during their years of preparation for the ministry the meagre provisions and scant supply of books for study should be a strong argument in the present day for those that have means to remove these discomforts at least. Why is it that comparatively so few offer themselves as candidates at our Theological halls. Is the reason not found in the difficulties that lie in the way. Man of wealth, come forward. Those of smaller means withhold not your “pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers” that souls may be satisfied. I have tried systematic giving as one of the best and most satisfactory methods of meeting our various obligations to the cause of religion, as being called by the name of Christ and professing to be His followers. If we refuse to consider ourselves as stewards and act and think as though we considered we could do as we liked with our property (so called), there cannot be a better test of our sincerity than this. Are we willing to spend and be spent for Christ, or do we refuse to part with our substance at the Master’s bidding. If we can honestly say we hold nothing back, then we may certainly hope and believe wealth is not our idol. If we cannot yield a portion when He requires it, with cheerfulness and joy, look to it the canker worm of covetousness is at the bottom of your religion and will eat the fruit that should show to God’s glory and nothing be left but the useless leaves of an empty profession. The mere act of giving is good and the habit of great benefit to the one practising it. But the heart motive sanctifies the gift. God is saying to Christendom to-day “Enter ye in and possess the land.” Now rally the forces and do battle

for the Lord. Victory is ours for the whole world is promised to the Saviour. Reader if method and decision are requisite to success in this life, how much more in those that pertain to the higher and better life. Give that God's house and worship may be carried on creditably and free from debt—Give that His ministers may be left free from worry and anxiety concerning their family requirements and by a generous salary give the means of taking part in every good work, also see that a provision be made for old age. The old servant should be provided for. Give that missions may be enlarged and missionaries be gladdened by accessions to their numbers and increase in their salaries and means of working. Give that the poor may bless the God of Peace and Saviour of the world. Give that the student may study under less difficulties than in the past. Give that Christian men and women who are working to the utmost of means and strength, to stem the tide of desolation, sweeping over our race and carrying off some of the brightest intellects and stalwart forms as slaves of the demon of intemperance. —Give according as God has given to you, freely, freely. Let not the question be how much must I give? but this, how can I ever give enough to my blessed Saviour. The eyes of all creation wait upon God's hand. He opens it and they are filled with good, there is peace, hope, comfort; and there should most certainly be a consecrated being, body, soul, and spirit. Now in conclusion let me repeat, give systematically and may God's blessing rest on this feeble attempt to speak a word for Jesus and His cause, the weakness all *mine*, the power if there is any, all *His*.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.